DECADES

MARVEL IN THE '70s

LEGION OF MONSTERS

MARVEL

DECADES

MARVEL IN THE '70s

LEGION OF MONSTERS

DECADES
MARVEL IN THE '70s

LEGION OF MONSTERS

WRITTEN BY **DOUG MOENCH, GERRY CONWAY, BILL MANTLO & GARY FRIEDRICH** WITH **MARV WOLFMAN, TONY ISABELLA, PAUL KIRSCHNER, RALPH REESE, ROY THOMAS, DON McGREGOR, RUSS JONES, JOHN WARNER & JEAN THOMAS**

PENCILED BY **VAL MAYERIK, SONNY TRINIDAD, GENE COLAN, MIKE PLOOG & FRANK ROBBINS** WITH **DAVE COCKRUM, PAUL KIRSCHNER & DICK GIORDANO**

INKED BY **SONNY TRINIDAD, GENE COLAN, MIKE PLOOG & STEVE GAN** WITH **DAN ADKINS, PABLO MARCOS, SAM GRAINGER, RALPH REESE, DICK GIORDANO & VAL MAYERIK**

COLORED BY **JANICE COHEN & CO.** WITH **MARIE SEVERIN**

LETTERED BY **KAREN MANTLO, JOHN COSTANZA & CO.**

ASSISTANT EDITOR **RALPH MACCHIO**

CONSULTING EDITORS **LEN WEIN & MARV WOLFMAN**

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR **ROY THOMAS**

EDITORS **TONY ISABELLA, JOHN WARNER, MARV WOLFMAN, STAN LEE & ROY THOMAS**

FRONT COVER ART BY **NEAL ADAMS**

BACK COVER ART BY **KEN BARR**

COLLECTION EDITOR **MARK D. BEAZLEY**
ASSISTANT EDITOR **CAITLIN O'CONNELL**
ASSOCIATE MANAGING EDITOR **KATERI WOODY**
ASSOCIATE MANAGER, DIGITAL ASSETS **JOE HOCHSTEIN**
MARVEL MASTERWORKS SERIES EDITOR **CORY SEDLMEIER**

SENIOR EDITOR, SPECIAL PROJECTS **JENNIFER GRÜNWALD**
VP PRODUCTION & SPECIAL PROJECTS **JEFF YOUNGQUIST**
RESEARCH **MIKE HANSEN**
LAYOUT **JEPH YORK**
PRODUCTION **COLORTEK & JOE FRONTIERE**
BOOK DESIGNER **ADAM DEL RE**
DIGITAL MANAGER/PRODUCTION **TIM SMITH 3**
DIGITAL PRODUCTION **KOU CHEN & RACHEL YOUNG**

SVP PRINT, SALES & MARKETING **DAVID GABRIEL**
EDITOR IN CHIEF **C.B. CEBULSKI**
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER **JOE QUESADA**
PRESIDENT **DAN BUCKLEY**
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER **ALAN FINE**

© 2019 MARVEL. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental.

INTRODUCTION

Eighty years. Hundreds of heroes and villains. Thousands of stories.

When it came to celebrating the anniversary of the House of Ideas, no single volume could possibly do justice to the full Marvel legacy. And so *Decades* was born. Book-by-book — decade-by-decade — this series of collected editions will show how the Marvel Universe has grown and developed through the eras. For each decade, we chose key characters or major themes important to the Marvel storytelling of the time — and, after careful deliberation, selected the tales that exemplify them. This is no mere "best of." As told through the prism of the adventures that helped define the different periods, this is a tour through history — of Marvel, of the comic book industry…and of the world around us.

As the 1970s began, Editor in Chief Stan Lee was looking to broaden Marvel's appeal to a more mature audience and pioneered the publisher's expansion into a larger magazine format — beginning in 1971 with *Savage Tales*. With atmospheric black-and-white artwork, a new generation of creators eager to stretch the boundaries of the industry and crucially, no need to comply with the strict demands of the Comics Code Authority, this new format provided the opportunity for a remarkable revival: the return of horror comics from the grave! Since the introduction of the CCA back in 1954, vampires, werewolves, zombies and other things that go bump in the night had been forbidden. But thanks in part to the influence of magazines like *Savage Tales* — which introduced the melancholy Man-Thing — *and* in part to the relaxation of CCA rules that swiftly followed, a succession of ghoulish characters, both brand new and terrifyingly familiar, soon established themselves as some of the biggest stars of the era. And they did so not just in the black-and-white pages of magazines like *Monsters Unleashed!* and *Dracula Lives!*, but in full-color comic books.

As Marvel's super hero line continued to evolve and expand, it was only natural — or indeed, supernatural — that these two genres would combine. And so the Marvel Universe became populated with a number of horror-themed characters, including two icons of fiction: Dracula, whose *Tomb of Dracula* series ran for 70 issues, and the Monster of Frankenstein, whose own book lasted a respectable eighteen. Marvel's very own lycanthrope — Jack Russell, the Werewolf by Night — first howled at the moon in *Marvel Spotlight* #2 before swiftly claiming his own title, and three issues later, the flame-skulled Ghost Rider blazed his way into fans' hearts in similar fashion. The debuts of all four are included here — but they were far from the end of the horror invasion.

Morbius, the Living Vampire, graduated from Spider-Man villain to full-fledged solo star, while Blade the Vampire Hunter first staked his claim to fame in the pages of *Tomb of Dracula*. Each features in his own lush, black-and-white story in *Marvel Preview #8*, alongside a pair of done-in-one tales of terror typical of anthology books of the time.

But what of the publication that gives this volume its title? In 1975, at the culmination of the horror magazine craze, came *Legion of Monsters #1* — collected in full here. Frankenstein's Monster stars in the haunting beauty-and-the-beast tale "The Monster and the Masque," and the shadow of Dracula hangs over, "Death Be Thou Proud!" Meanwhile, "Vengeance Crude" introduces a slightly lesser known Marvel monster — the Manphibian — and "The Flies" is a fine example of sinister storytelling.

Legion of Monsters only ran for one issue — but the title was too good to waste. And so, in addition to reviving the theme for *Marvel Preview #8* the following year, a quartet of Marvel's grooviest ghoulies — Ghost Rider, Man-Thing, Morbius and Werewolf by Night — were united under that same banner in *Marvel Premiere #28*. As the cover puts it, it's "the most spine-tingling team-up of all!" Or, in the words of Johnny Blaze himself, "This is like a 3D version of the Monster Mash!" But when this frightful foursome gets together, don't go expecting a happy ending…

Vampires and werewolves and monsters, oh my. All three — and worse — lie in wait in this tome of terror, which offers you a mere peek inside the crypt of shadows that was Marvel's horror output of the 1970s. Read on if you dare!

—Jess Harrold

CURTIS
02447
LEGION OF MONSTERS
№1 SEPT.
$1
DRACULA AND THE FRANKENSTEIN MONSTER IN
THE LEGION OF MONSTERS™
WORLD PREMIERE ISSUE
FEATURING THE ORIGIN OF THE MANPHIBIAN!
IN THIS ISSUE:
BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA IN COMICS FORM

Art: PABLO MARCOS

Vol. 1, No. 1 September, 1975

STAN LEE presents

THE LEGION OF MONSTERS

CONTENTS

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL MONSTER
Your humble editor talks about monsters, magazines, and windmills.

THE FRANKENSTEIN MONSTER:
THE MONSTER AND THE MASQUE
It was a jolly old costume party until the arrival of the two uninvited guests: one, the patchwork creation of a madman's genius and the other, the all-too-familiar specter of *murder most foul!*

THE MANPHIBIAN: VENGEANCE CRUDE
He came from beyond the *stars*, seeking revenge on the murderer who had shattered his life—if mankind didn't destroy *him* first! From the House of Ideas, the birth of a shocking new super-star!

THE LEGION REPORT
The latest news from the world of monster cinema.

THE FLIES
They called him Chuckles, and they *laughed* at him. After all, the poor freak loved *all* living things, didn't he? Even such helpless ones as . . . *the flies!*

MONSTER MADNESS
What fools we monsters be!

BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA:
DEATH, BE THOU PROUD
A man-demon stalks London—and if he isn't found, an innocent girl must die! A new chapter in our critically-acclaimed adaptation.

MONSTER GALLERY
A gruesome gathering of awesome artwork—not for the squeamish.

LEGION OF MONSTERS is published by MAGAZINE MANAGEMENT CO., INC. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION, 575 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022. Published Bi-Monthly. Copyright © 1975 by Magazine Management Co., Inc. All rights reserved 575 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022. Vol. 1, No. 1, September 1975 issue. Price $1.00 per copy in the U.S. and Canada. All business inquiries should be addressed to Tom Montemarano, Director of Circulation 9th floor. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. Printed in the United States of America.

ARCHIE GOODWIN
Editor-in-Chief

TONY ISABELLA
Editor

ROY THOMAS
Contributing Editor

LEN WEIN
MARV WOLFMAN
Consulting Editors

LENNY GROW
Production

BARBARA ALTMAN
NORA MACLIN
Design

PABLO MARCOS
STU SCHWARTZBERG
DON THOMPSON
MAGGIE THOMPSON
IRV WATANABE
Staff and Such

NEAL ADAMS
Cover

Support Your Local Monster

The usual first issue ramblings by Tony Isabella

Hi. Remember me? I used to edit THE HAUNT OF HORROR and MONSTERS UNLEASHED and TALES OF THE ZOMBIE. And I was also a consulting editor on DRACULA LIVES and VAMPIRE TALES. Well, now, for the entire run of the magazine you're holding in your hot little hands, you can get every monster ever created! How do we do it? Volume!

Incomprehensible Robert Klein pastiches aside...

Monster comics aren't selling these days, friends. Surely even the least astute among you has noticed that all five of the magazines mentioned above have been cancelled...despite the considerable efforts of myself, Roy Thomas, Marv Wolfman, and Don "A Legend In His Own Time" McGregor. THE LEGION OF MONSTERS is Marvel's and my attempt to reverse this unfortunate trend.

Why, you might ask, in the face of five "failures", is Marvel putting out yet another monster-oriented magazine? Do we get some kick out of seemingly cracking our craniums on stone walls? Can't we take a hint? Or are we merely fighting windmills? The reasons are many and complex. To try to sum them up:

1) People *were* buying the cancelled magazines; they just were not buying *enough* copies of each title.

2) We never really *lost* money on the cancelled magazines; our profits were just not great enough for us to *not* move on to a somewhat different type of publication.

3) Reader response to the magazines was enthusiastic.

4) Most of us enjoyed producing the magazines.

And, since we believe in telling the *whole* story...

5) Their cancellation left us with an *incredible* inventory of unpublished stories and artwork that, naturally, we'd like to publish somewhere.

So, with the windmills focused firmly in our sights, we enter the publishing arena with THE LEGION OF MONSTERS. It's my personal feeling that the market which wasn't great enough to carry *five* monster-oriented titles *will* support *one* such publication—indeed, will make that one magazine a runaway success.

But we can't do it alone. If you want THE LEGION OF MONSTERS around, you've got to support it.

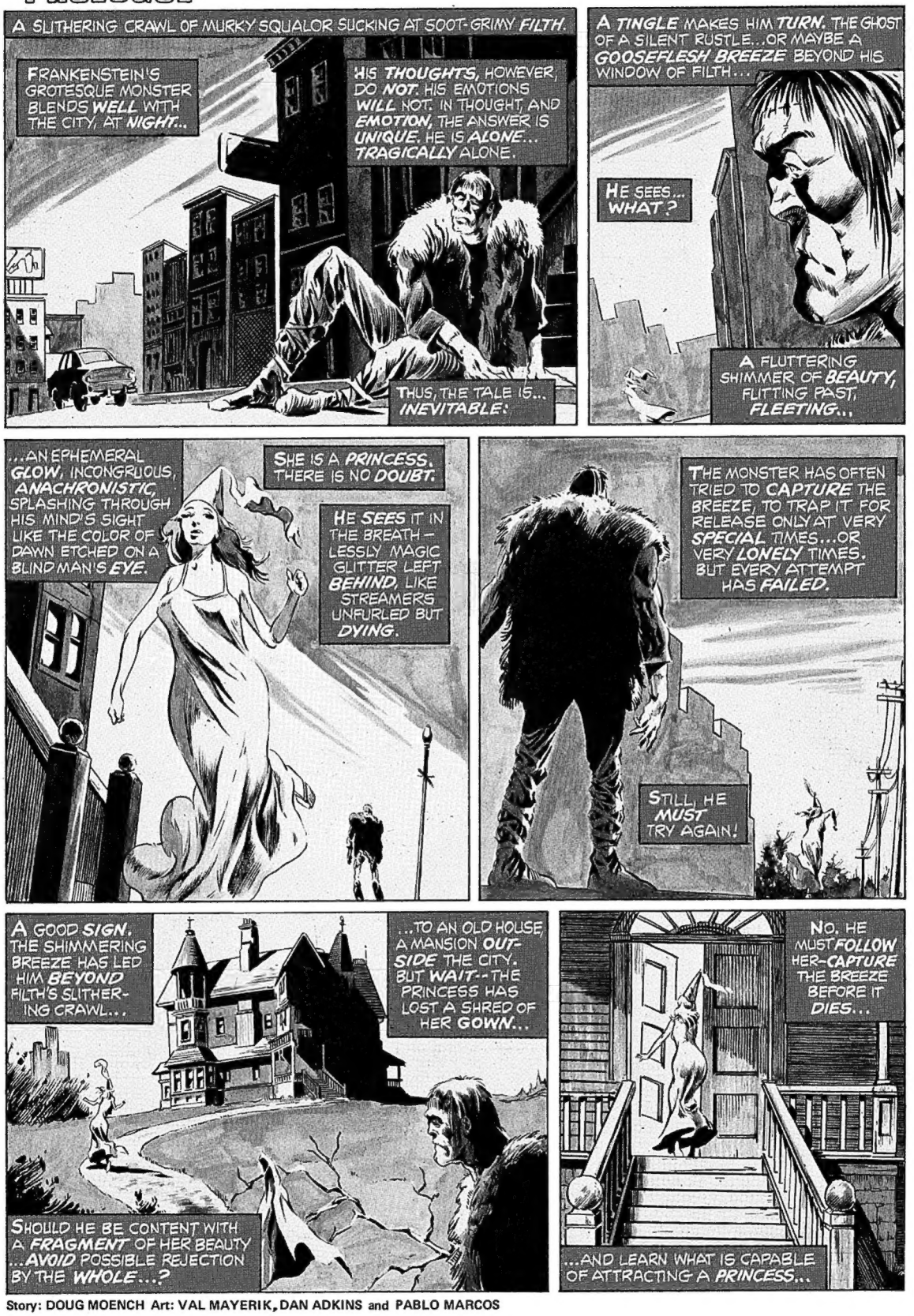
For *our* part, we'll simply try to bring you the best possible magazine we can. Since your past letters indicate that you prefer reading about series characters to reading non-series stories, you can figure on seeing all your favorites in this magazine. Besides the continuing adaptation of Bram Stoker's original DRACULA, we've got stories completed (or in the works) featuring such stars as Morbius, Satana, Brother Voodoo, Blade, the Man-Thing, and some others we'll save to surprise you with at a later date.

When we do run a non-series story, you can be sure it was selected from the very cream of our inventory crop. That crop holds stories by the likes of Neal Adams, Bob Brown, Tony DeZuniga, Mike Kaluta, Mike Ploog, and Craig Russell, to name a few. Not what *we* would call less than the best, right?

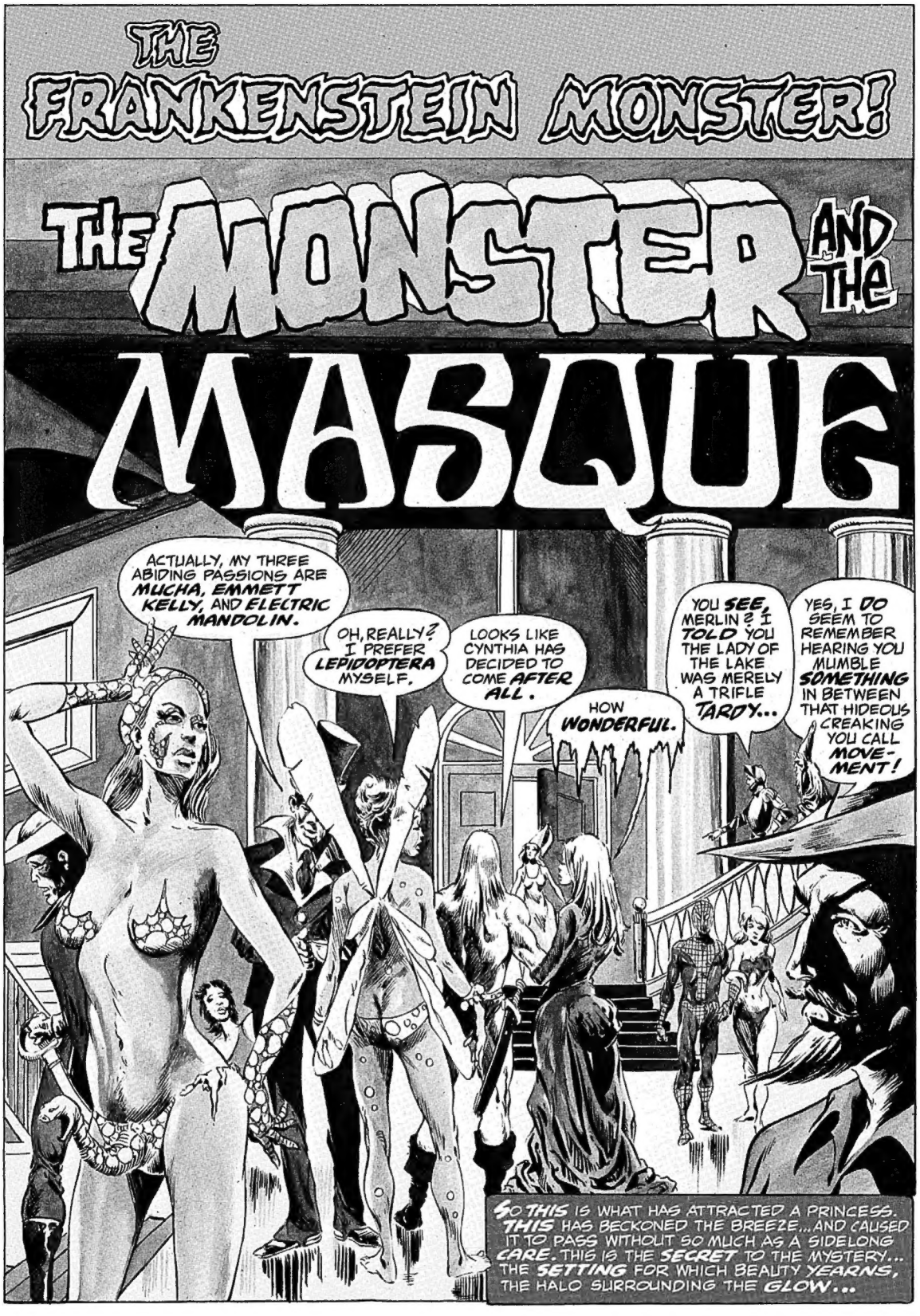
Finally, just to give THE LEGION OF MONSTERS more of a "magazine" feel, we've got a couple of regular features, designed to keep you both entertained and informed. There's the absolutely *fascinating* editorial we'll be tossing at you every issue. Our reporting duo, Don and Maggie Thompson, will be keeping you in the know about the world of monster cinema. Stu Schwartzberg, if he wants his family returned safely, will keep you regaled with his monstrous cartoons. And, starting with our third issue, we'll have our version of that proud publishing tradition—the letters section.

Maybe it's too soon to be so optimistic, but, to me, it looks like the windmills are weakening. T.I.

PROLOGUE:


A SLITHERING CRAWL OF MURKY SQUALOR SUCKING AT SOOT-GRIMY FILTH.
FRANKENSTEIN'S GROTESQUE MONSTER BLENDS WELL WITH THE CITY, AT NIGHT...
HIS THOUGHTS, HOWEVER, DO NOT. HIS EMOTIONS WILL NOT. IN THOUGHT AND EMOTION, THE ANSWER IS UNIQUE. HE IS ALONE... TRAGICALLY ALONE.
THUS, THE TALE IS... INEVITABLE!
A TINGLE MAKES HIM TURN. THE GHOST OF A SILENT RUSTLE...OR MAYBE A GOOSEFLESH BREEZE BEYOND HIS WINDOW OF FILTH...
HE SEES... WHAT?
A FLUTTERING SHIMMER OF BEAUTY, FLITTING PAST, FLEETING...
...AN EPHEMERAL GLOW, INCONGRUOUS, ANACHRONISTIC, SPLASHING THROUGH HIS MIND'S SIGHT LIKE THE COLOR OF DAWN ETCHED ON A BLIND MAN'S EYE.
SHE IS A PRINCESS. THERE IS NO DOUBT.
HE SEES IT IN THE BREATH-LESSLY MAGIC GLITTER LEFT BEHIND, LIKE STREAMERS UNFURLED BUT DYING.
THE MONSTER HAS OFTEN TRIED TO CAPTURE THE BREEZE, TO TRAP IT FOR RELEASE ONLY AT VERY SPECIAL TIMES...OR VERY LONELY TIMES. BUT EVERY ATTEMPT HAS FAILED.
STILL, HE MUST TRY AGAIN!
A GOOD SIGN. THE SHIMMERING BREEZE HAS LED HIM BEYOND FILTH'S SLITHERING CRAWL...
...TO AN OLD HOUSE, A MANSION OUTSIDE THE CITY. BUT WAIT--THE PRINCESS HAS LOST A SHRED OF HER GOWN...
SHOULD HE BE CONTENT WITH A FRAGMENT OF HER BEAUTY ...AVOID POSSIBLE REJECTION BY THE WHOLE...?
NO. HE MUST FOLLOW HER-CAPTURE THE BREEZE BEFORE IT DIES...
...AND LEARN WHAT IS CAPABLE OF ATTRACTING A PRINCESS...

Story: DOUG MOENCH Art: VAL MAYERIK, DAN ADKINS and PABLO MARCOS


THE FRANKENSTEIN MONSTER!
THE MONSTER AND THE MASQUE
ACTUALLY, MY THREE ABIDING PASSIONS ARE MUCHA, EMMETT KELLY, AND ELECTRIC MANDOLIN.
OH, REALLY? I PREFER LEPIDOPTERA MYSELF.
LOOKS LIKE CYNTHIA HAS DECIDED TO COME AFTER ALL.
HOW WONDERFUL.
YOU SEE, MERLIN? I TOLD YOU THE LADY OF THE LAKE WAS MERELY A TRIFLE TARDY...
YES, I DO SEEM TO REMEMBER HEARING YOU MUMBLE SOMETHING IN BETWEEN THAT HIDEOUS CREAKING YOU CALL MOVEMENT!
SO THIS IS WHAT HAS ATTRACTED A PRINCESS. THIS HAS BECKONED THE BREEZE... AND CAUSED IT TO PASS WITHOUT SO MUCH AS A SIDELONG CARE. THIS IS THE SECRET TO THE MYSTERY... THE SETTING FOR WHICH BEAUTY YEARNS, THE HALO SURROUNDING THE GLOW...

BUT...WHAT IS THIS?
HEY--!
WHAT'RE YOU DOIN' OUT HERE?
RRR!
TAKE IT EASY, PAL... NO NEED TO GET ANTISOCIAL...
I'M STRAIGHT AS AN ARROW.
JUST FIGURED YOU BELONGED INSIDE...
...HERE--WITH THE REST OF THE PARTY.
LISTEN--THE PUNCH BOWL'S OVER THERE. BUT I'VE GOTTA FIND OUT WHERE THE JOHN'S STASHED IN THIS JOINT!
SO I'LL CATCH YA LATER, HUH?
PEOPLE AS BIZARRE AS HE IS... PEOPLE WHO DO NOT STARE, SCREAM, OR ATTACK. ARE THEY MONSTERS TOO...? NO MATTER. THOUGH PASSIVE, THEY ARE NOT FRIENDLY. NO ONE MOVES FORWARD TO GREET OR EMBRACE HIM. AND SO HE IS ALONE AGAIN, IN THE COMPANY OF A CROWD.
AND, ALONE, HE MUST SEEK A BREEZE AMONGST THIS HURRICANE OF GAUDY MONSTERS. WHERE IS SHE...?
THERE.
TALKING...
SMILING.
SHE SMILED AT HIM.
HE KNOWS JOY...
...BUT DOES NOT KNOW A SMILE OF AMUSEMENT FROM ONE OF GREETING.

AND NOW SHE LAUGHS... A MOST WONDERFUL SOUND TO HIS EARS...
BUT DOES SHE LAUGH IN JOY...?
...OR AT HIM?
HE IS NOT CERTAIN.
BUT PERHAPS IF HE MOVED QUICKLY--RIGHT NOW--HE MIGHT CAPTURE HER...
...TRAP HER AND KEEP HER FOR RELEASE ONLY AT VERY SPECIAL...
CRRR
WHAT--?! HE WAS WRONG. THEY ARE LIKE THE OTHERS. THEY ATTACK HIM--FOR NO REASON--!
BUT HE WILL NOT BE FOOLED THIS TIME, NOR TRUSTING.
YOWW!!
HE WILL END IT SWIFTLY.
SAY...THAT WAS REAL GOOD--JUST THE WAY KARLOFF WOULDA DONE IT.
AND HERE I THOUGHT MY WOLFMAN WAS GOOD...
THE MONSTER DOES NOT UNDERSTAND...
BUT I GUESS I'M GETTING TOO OLD TO BE AS ATHLETIC AS CHANEY WAS..
STILL, THE COSTUME AIN'T BAD, EH?
AND NOW, NOR DOES HE WISH TO UNDERSTAND.
COME ON--I'LL GET YOU A DRINK.
AFTER ALL, US CREATURES OF THE NIGHT HAVE TO STICK TOGETHER, DON'T WE?
A SLOW THOUGHT: IF THE MONSTER REMEMBERS CORRECTLY, SHOULDN'T THAT WOMAN HAVE...MORE CLOTHES? OR DOESN'T IT REALLY MATTER...?

PRETTY GOOD PUNCH, ACTUALLY.
I SAW LOUIE SPIKING IT TEN MINUTES AFTER I DID.
PUNCH...? SPIKING?
WHAT IS HE SUPPOSED TO DO WITH--
WELP, DOWN THE OLE HATCH, FRANKIE--!
AHH, HE IS EXPECTED TO DRINK IT THEN...
LIKE THIS--?
HMM...THE LIQUID IS COOL TO HIS THROAT... AND YET WARM TO HIS STOMACH. HE DECIDES THAT IT IS...
...GOOD.
OH, A TWO-FISTED DRINKER, EH?
WELL, WHY NOT?
"AFTER ALL...
"THAT'S WHAT PARTIES ARE FOR!"
Y'KNOW, FOR SOMEONE WHO DOESN'T TALK MUCH, YOU'RE A PRETTY NICE GUY--AND THAT COSTUME YOU'RE WEARING IS FANTASTIC!
ACROSS THE ROOM, A JESTER WATCHES... UNSMILING.
MUST BE BUILT-UP BOOTS, HUH? YOU CAN'T BE THAT TALL BY YOURSELF...
BY THE WAY, FRANKIE--YOU TRYING TO PUT OUT A FIRE OR SOMETHING?
THAT MUST BE YOUR SIXTH CUP IN HALF AS MANY MINUTES--!
YES, THIS DRINK IS GOOD. HE DOES NOT EVEN MIND THAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO CONCENTRATE ON HIS FRIEND'S WORDS...OR THAT HE HAS ALMOST FORGOTTEN THE REASON FOR HIS PRESENCE HERE...
WELL, IF IT ISN'T PRINCESS CYNTHIA--! YOU'RE THE BELLE OF THE BALL TONIGHT, GORGEOUS.
HELLO, ANDY. WHY DON'T YOU INTRODUCE ME TO YOUR GHOULISH FRIEND?
EVEN WITH ALL THAT MAKEUP, I KNOW I'VE NEVER MET HIM BEFORE...

HER--! AND SHE WISHES TO...MEET HIM?
WELL, I'VE BEEN CALLING HIM FRANKIE--BUT I DON'T REALLY KNOW HIS NAME, CYNTHIA...
YOU SEE, HE DOESN'T TALK MUCH.
THAT'S ALL RIGHT---I LIKE THE STRONG, SILENT TYPES.
YEAH, HIS EYES SAY IT ALL--AND HE'S HAD THEM GLUED TO YOU EVER SINCE HE GOT HERE.
THEN THAT'S THE MOST ELOQUENT COMPLIMENT I'VE HEARD IN AN ENTIRE EVENING OF BOORISH TALK.
PERHAPS YOU'D LIKE TO PAY ME A FURTHER COMPLIMENT...BY DANCING WITH ME..?
OH, COME NOW --NO NEED TO BE BASHFUL!
YEAH-- DANCE WITH HER--!
YOU'LL MAKE THE PERFECT COUPLE.. THE MONSTER AND THE MAIDEN!
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST--!
THE MUSIC BEGINS..WEIRD, UNNATURALLY DISTORTED.. AS THE CROWD FORMS, A COALESCING OF EYES...
THE PRINCESS EMBRACES HIM... BEGINS TO MOVE. DIMLY, HE RE-MEMBERS THE RITUAL FROM A TIME LONG PAST...PERHAPS FROM A TIME WHEN HE WAS A MAN, AND NOT A MONSTER...
BUT HE CAN NO LONGER MASTER THOSE ANCIENT MOVES. AND YET, CAN HE REFUSE TO TRY--? HIS PRINCESS HAS FOUND HIM--CAPTURED HIM--EMBRACED HIM. HE CANNOT FLEE CAPTIVITY SUCH AS THIS.
DON'T BE NERVOUS. I'LL LEAD FOR US.
THUS, HIS WILDEST DREAMS HAVE BECOME GLORIOUS REALITY. HER FACE AND TOUCH..HER VOICE AND GRACEFULLY SWAYING MOVEMENTS.. ALL COMBINE TO SET HIS MIND SPINNING IN ECSTASY...

AWKWARDLY, HE IMITATES THE GRACEFUL INTRICACY OF HER DANCE.
DESIGNED TO PROLONG HIS ECSTASY, THE ATTEMPT SUCCEEDS ONLY IN--
--DISASTER.
AND LAUGHTER...
HARSH, RAUCOUS RIDICULE...
...UGLY SOUNDS, RELIEVED ONLY BY A PRINCESS...
OH, YOU POOR MAN!
SHE HAS CALLED HIM A MAN --- WHEN HE IS REALLY A MONSTER...
NO--A FOOL...WHO DOESN'T BELONG HERE...AMONG THE TRULY LIVING.
BUT THE LAUGHTER HAS CEASED.
...AND THE CROWD HAS TURNED AWAY, EMBARRASSED, UPON PERCEIVING THE PITY IN HIS PRINCESS.
DON'T LET THOSE BABBOONS GET TO YOU--MOST OF THEM CAN'T DANCE ANY BETTER THAN YOU.
LISTEN... I'D BETTER MINGLE SOME MORE...
BUT THANKS FOR THE DANCE... AND MAYBE I'LL SEE YOU AGAIN LATER, OKAY?
BE GOOD.
SO, EVEN IN THE FACE OF HER KINDNESS, HE HAS LOST HER...
AND WHEN SHE HAS GONE...
EXCUSE ME. I NOTICE YOU'RE A FRIEND OF CYNTHIA'S...
MAYBE YOU'D LIKE TO HELP HER.
HELP HER...? THE MONSTER WOULD DO ANYTHING FOR HIS PRINCESS...EVEN IF SHE HAS GONE...

DON'T BREATHE A WORD OF THIS TO ANYONE--BUT CYNTHIA'S IN DANGER OF BEING MURDERED TONIGHT. SHE'S RICH--PLENTY RICH--AND THERE ARE PLENTY OF PEOPLE WHO'D STAND TO GAIN A LOT IF SHE DIED.
MOST OF THEM ARE HERE TONIGHT--DISGUISED.
UNDERSTAND WHAT I'M GETTING AT--?
BUT THE MONSTER MERELY GRUNTS...
...AND POINTS TO HIS MOUTH.
ALL RIGHT--IF YOU CAN'T TALK WITH THAT MASK ON, JUST NOD IF YOU'RE GAME IN HELPING ME.
SEE THAT GUY OVER THERE IN THE SUIT OF ARMOR--?
HE STANDS TO GAIN THE MOST IF CYNTHIA SHOULD DIE...
HE'S HER HUSBAND---AND ON TOP OF THE MONEY MOTIVE, HE'S INSANELY JEALOUS...
IF YOU CAN KEEP AN EYE ON HIM...I'LL BE ABLE TO WATCH THE OTHERS...
AND IF WE WORK TOGETHER ON THIS, WE JUST MIGHT BE ABLE TO SAVE HER LIFE.
THINK YOU CAN HANDLE IT?
THE MONSTER NODS--EAGERLY.
GOOD. NOW REMEMBER --STICK TO THE KNIGHT LIKE GLUE.
AND DON'T WORRY WHERE CYNTHIA IS...
JUST KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE KNIGHT NO MATTER WHERE HE GOES. OKAY--GO ON.
AND SO, MONSTER FOLLOWS KNIGHT.
...EVERYWHERE.

IT MATTERS LITTLE TO THE MONSTER THAT THE KNIGHT GROWS NERVOUS.
NOTHING WILL KEEP HIM MORE THAN THREE PACES FROM THE KNIGHT'S BACK.
IN FACT, THE MONSTER HAS A GOOD MIND TO CRUSH THIS WOULD-BE-MURDERER RIGHT NOW...
NOW WHY THE DEVIL WOULD ANYONE WANT TO STEAL MY SWORD--?!
BUT NO--BETTER TO ADHERE TO THE JESTER'S PLAN.
PERHAPS HE KNOWS SOMETHING THE MONSTER DOES NOT.
BUT FINALLY, UPSTAIRS...
STILL--?!
NOW LOOK HERE, SIR-- I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE OR WHAT YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING...
...BUT I STRONGLY RESENT THE FACT THAT YOU'VE BEEN BREATHING DOWN MY NECK FOR THE PAST TWENTY MINUTES--!
AND IF YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING TO FOLLOW ME IN HERE, THEN YOU'VE GOT ANOTHER--
GEORGE--! WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS ALTERCATION--?
ER... NOTHING, MY DEAR. IT'S JUST THAT THIS, UH... GENTLEMAN... HAS BEEN NIPPING AT MY HEELS FOR THE PAST HALF-HOUR...

OH, HE HAS, HAS HE?
WELL, JUST YOU LISTEN TO ME, "SIR"...
IF YOU'RE ONE OF THOSE GAY PEOPLE, YOU CAN JUST START LOOKING FOR SOMEONE ELSE TO PICK ON, BECAUSE THIS MAN HAPPENS TO BE HAPPILY MARRIED--!
AND I SHOULD KNOW. I'M HIS--
SWAPP
OHH--!
HOW DARE YOU STRIKE MY WIFE--?!!
SPLANG
KLASH!
GEORGE.
OH MY LORD, GEORGE.
EEEEEE
A SCREAM--DOWN THE HALLWAY...

THE PRINCESS--IT MUST BE THE PRINCESS--!
ANSWER ME, GEORGE--ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
FOR, IF THE OBESE WOMAN IS THE KNIGHT'S WIFE, THEN THE PRINCESS IS NOT...
...AND THE JESTER HAS--
--LIED.
AGAIN THE MONSTER'S MIND IS SET TO SPINNING...BUT THIS TIME ECSTASY DOES NOT SHARE THE QUEASY SENSATION...
YOU--!!
BUT YOU'RE TOO LATE--I'VE KILLED HER!!
KILLED HER--AND YOU HELPED ME!!
THEY'RE COMING NOW--THEY'VE HEARD HER SCREAMS!
THEY'RE COMING UP THE STAIRS--BUT THEY WON'T TAKE ME!
THEY'LL NEVER TAKE ME!!
TANK!
FURY BEGINS TO REPLACE THE MONSTER'S CONFUSION. HE REALIZES NOW: HE HAS BEEN DECEIVED--AND HIS PRINCESS, HIS BEAUTIFUL PRINCESS HAS BEEN SLAIN. BUT THE SWORD HAS BEEN THROWN SHORT..AND NOTHING WILL NOW STOP HIM FROM DESTROYING THIS FOUL MURDERER OF BEAUTY!

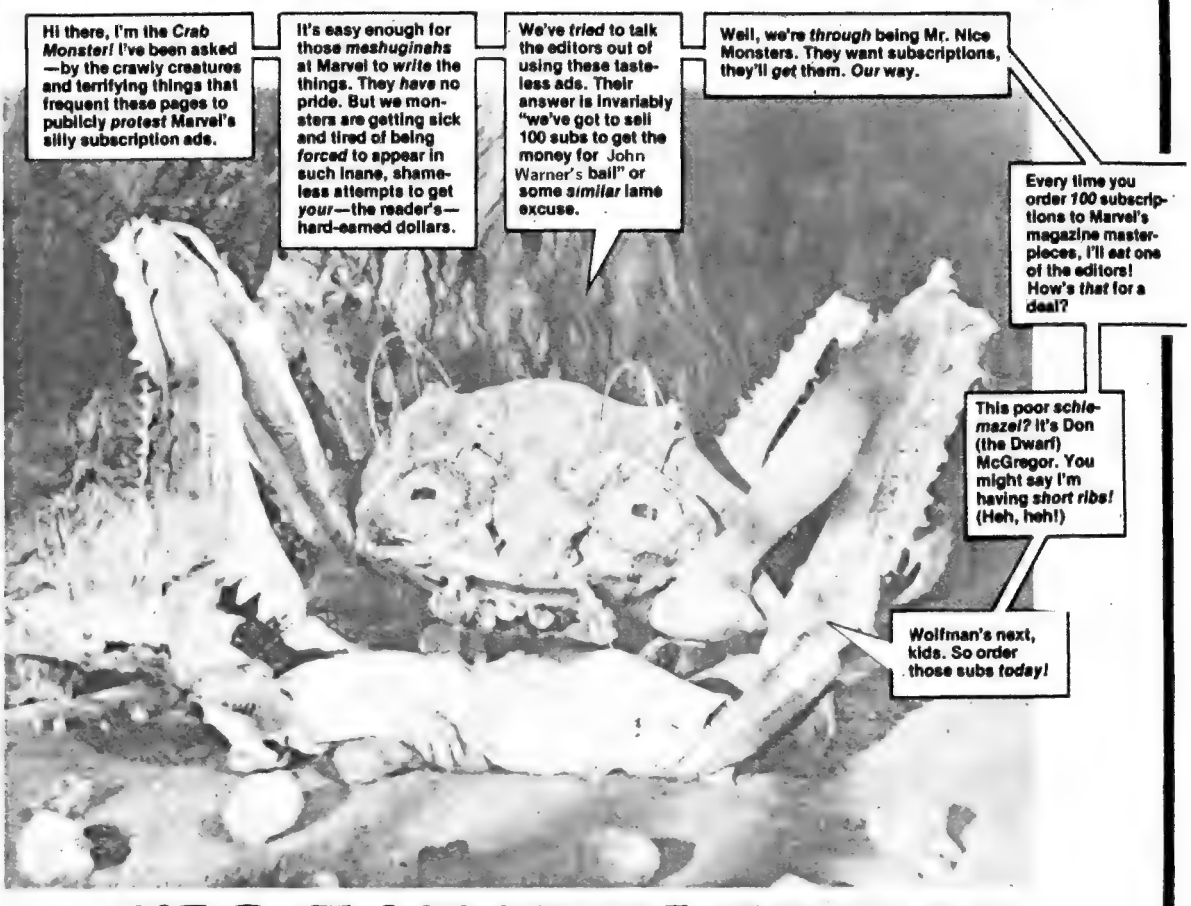
BUT--
STOP HIM-HE MURDERED MY WIFE!
AGAIN THE JESTER HAS DECEIVED HIM!
THE BLOODY SWORD IS STILL LYING AT HIS FEET!!
BUT BERSERK RAGE NOW WASHES THE LAST REMNANTS OF CONFUSION FROM HIS MIND--
THEY SURGE FORWARD, HANDS GRAPPLING TO RESTRAIN HIM...
--AND THE MONSTER RIPS THROUGH THEM, UNLEASHING CARNAGE WITH THE UNRELENTING FEROCITY OF A PRIMORDIAL TITAN.
STOP HIM!
OH MY GOD--!!
HE'S NOT WEARING A MASK--!
HIS FACE IS REAL--!
HE'S--

AND WHEN IT IS OVER...
..THE JESTER IS GONE.
THE JINGLING OF BELLS--DOWN THE HALLWAY...
OUT ON THE BALCONY...?
NO. THE SOUNDS ORIGINATE BELOW THE BALCONY...
THE JESTER IS IN A CAR...
ESCAPING.
NO.
PROK-K
NOT IF THE MONSTER HAS HIS WAY..
NOT IF FURY TRANSFORMS A HIDEOUS GARGOYLE--
SKRASH!
--INTO AN AVENGING ANGEL OF DESTRUCTION.

VOICES, BEHIND HIM. BUT THEY DID NOT MURDER HIS PRINCESS-- THUS, THE MONSTER DOES NOT WISH TO BATTLE THEM A SECOND TIME. HE WISHES ONLY TO REACH THE--
--GROUND.
THERE HE IS--! BUT WHERE ARE THE POLICE?!
THEY'RE ON THEIR WAY--I CALLED THEM SOON'S I HEARD THE SCREAMS!
THE MONSTER HAS MET THE POLICE BEFORE...
IT IS NOT AN EXPERIENCE HE CARES TO REPEAT.
JING-KACHING
THE JESTER HAD NOT DIED--
BLAM
--UNDER THE GARGOYLE, ANYWAY.
OH, LORD!

SIRENS SHRIEK PAST A TATTER OF SILK.
THE MONSTER WAITS WHILE SCURRYING MEN ENTER THE SILENT HOUSE...
...AND THEN REMOVES THE BREEZE-FLUTTERED TATTER FROM ITS PERCH...
...STARES AT IT FOR LONG, POIGNANTLY REFLECTIVE MOMENTS...
...DAUBS IT TO HIS NECK, STAUNCHING THE FLOW OF BLOOD FROM BULLET WOUND...
...AND WALKS OFF, HEAD DOWN...HAND CLUTCHING A FRAGMENT OF DEAD BEAUTY...
PERHAPS IT WILL BRING HIM LUCK... ENABLE HIM TO CATCH THE NEXT BREEZE PASSING BEYOND HIS WINDOW OF FILTH, IF ANY WILL EVEN COME NEAR HIM....NOW.
FIN

IF YOU SUBSCRIBE TO THE LEGION OF MONSTERS


Hi there, I'm the *Crab Monster!* I've been asked —by the crawly creatures and terrifying things that frequent these pages to publicly *protest* Marvel's silly subscription ads.
It's easy enough for those *meshuginahs* at Marvel to *write* the things. They *have* no pride. But we monsters are getting sick and tired of being *forced* to appear in such inane, shameless attempts to get *your*—the reader's—hard-earned dollars.
We've *tried* to talk the editors out of using these tasteless ads. Their answer is invariably "we've got to sell 100 subs to get the money for John Warner's bail" or some *similar* lame excuse.
Well, we're *through* being Mr. Nice Monsters. They want subscriptions, they'll *get* them. *Our* way.
Every time you order *100* subscriptions to Marvel's magazine masterpieces, I'll *eat* one of the editors! How's *that* for a deal?
This poor *schlemazel*? It's Don (the Dwarf) McGregor. You might say I'm having *short ribs!* (Heh, heh!)
Wolfman's next, kids. So order those subs *today!*

I'LL EAT THIS EDITOR

THE LEGION OF MONSTERS

MARVEL MAGAZINE GROUP, Subscription Dept.
575 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022

YES! I don't want to risk missing any more of your super-action and far-out fantasy books! So here's my hard-earned bread (check or money order only) for:

TITLE	RATES U.S.	CANADA	FOREIGN
SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN (six issues)	$ 6.50	$ 7.50	$ 9.50
PLANET OF THE APES (twelve issues)	13.00	15.00	19.00
MARVEL MOVIE PREMIERE (four issues)	4.50	5.50	7.50
THOR THE MIGHTY (six issues)	6.50	7.50	9.50
THE LEGION OF MONSTERS (six issues)	6.50	7.50	9.50
MARVEL SUPER ACTION (six issues)	6.50	7.50	9.50
STARLORDS (six issues)	6.50	7.50	9.50
SHERLOCK HOLMES (six issues)	6.50	7.50	9.50
DOC SAVAGE (six issues)	6.50	7.50	9.50
DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU (twelve issues)	13.00	15.00	19.00
CRAZY (seven issues)	4.00	5.00	7.00
SCIENCE FICTION (six issues)	6.50	7.50	9.50
MARVEL PREVIEW (four issues)	4.50	5.50	7.50
KULL AND THE BARBARIANS (six issues)	6.50	7.50	9.50

Name _____ Age _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Allow 8 to 10 weeks on delivery. Please—checks or money orders only.

OIL! ONCE YOU WOULD HAVE STUDIED THIS SUBSTANCE IN MINUTEST DETAIL, AS YOU WOULD HAVE ANY ALIEN WORLD'S NATURAL RESOURCES.
FOX OIL COMPANY
YOU WOULD HAVE RECORDED THE INHABITANTS' USE OF IT-- DOCUMENTED THEIR CONSTANT SEARCHING FOR IT.
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
THE RIG JUST STARTED SHAKIN' -- LIKE IT WAS GETTIN' READY TO...
FOOSH
BUT NOW ALL THEIR QUEST FOR 'BLACK GOLD' MEANS TO YOU IS FREEDOM--
--FREEDOM TO STALK THIS STRANGE WORLD AGAIN--
--AND CLAIM THE REVENGE WHICH HAS BEEN DENIED YOU FOR A THOUSAND YEARS!
VENGEANCE CRUDE
OH MY LORD!

Plot: MARV WOLFMAN Script: TONY ISABELLA Art: DAVE COCKRUM and SAM GRAINGER

A THOUSAND YEARS: WHAT STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT DID YOU LAST RECORD THESE CREATURES TO BE IN?
THEY DID NOT POSSESS THESE METAL-HURTLING THINGS THEN, DID THEY? BUT THEY WERE FEARFUL THEN.

A THOUSAND YEARS: AND THEY HAVE NOT LOST THEIR FEAR
YOU BRUSH THEM ASIDE, MORE IN SORROW THAN ANNOY-ANCE.
THEY DO NOT STOP TO REALIZE THAT THE STRENGTH WHICH FREED YOU FROM THEIR OIL-GATHERING MACHINE COULD HAVE RAISED FAR WORSE THAN BRUISES ON THEIR FRAGILE FORMS.

INSTEAD, THEY WILL DEEM THEIR CONTINUED EXISTENCE AFTER FACING YOU "MIRACULOUS"--
--AND THEY WILL CALL YOU...
MONSTER!

THAT'S WHAT YOU'VE BECOME, MR. AARON FOX--AND YOU CAN'T EVEN SEE IT!
THERE ARE WORSE NAMES, MY DEAR WIFE.
WHAT WOULD YOU CALL A GROWN WOMAN WHO STOOPS TO SEDUCING TEEN-AGE BOYS?

YOU PIG!
ONLY YOU COULD TAKE A SIMPLE FRIENDSHIP--
SLAP!
AND TURN IT INTO SOMETHING SORDID!

FENTON! TAKE ME TO THE AIRPORT!
I'M LEAVING THAT ANIMAL!
AS YOU WISH, MADAM.

WHEN WILL YOU LEARN, BETH?
I PAY FENTON'S SALARY!
OH, HE'LL DRIVE YOU AROUND FOR AN HOUR OR TWO--
--BUT THEN HE'LL BRING YOU RIGHT BACK HERE TO ME.

"IT'S RATHER AMUSING, YOU KNOW. BECAUSE YOU'RE PROBABLY THE ONLY HUMAN BEING I CARE FOR ON THIS MUDBALL OF A PLANET. I DON'T RELISH TREATING YOU LIKE ONE OF MY HOLDINGS.
WHICH ROUTE WOULD MADAM PREFER, I -- GOOD LORD!
THERE'S SOME SORT OF BEAST BLOCKING THE ROAD!
"BUT AS LONG AS YOU SO STRONGLY DISAPPROVE OF MY CURRENT 'INVESTMENTS' -- AND TALK ABOUT THEM TO IDEALISTIC LITTLE BOYS--
MADAM! DUCK DOWN UNDER THE SEAT!
THE THING IS GOING TO--
SCREECH
"-- I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO KEEP YOU A VIRTUAL PRISONER IN YOUR OWN HOME!"
KRASH
OUR ONLY HOPE IS TO MAKE A RUN...
AYIEEEEEEE
NOOO
YOU HAVE FOUND HIM.

RING-GG
SO SOON?
FENTON COULD HAVE HUMORED HER A BIT LONGER.
MR. FOX! ALL HELL HAS BROKEN OUT DOWN AT THE OIL FIELDS!
SOME SORT OF MONSTER CRAWLED OUT OF SHAFT #27!
SHAFT #27!? THAT'S OUR MOST PROMISING NEW WELL!
WE NEED THAT OIL DESPERATELY!
ATWOOD! READY THE SPECIAL 'COPTER IMMEDIATELY!
HANG THE RISK, MAN! THIS IS AN EMERGENCY!
HE IS INSANE, OF COURSE.
YOU HAVE KNOWN THIS SINCE THE MOMENT--
--HE ENTERED YOUR LIFE--
--AND TOOK FROM IT--
--ALL THAT MADE IT WORTHWHILE
HE WAS THE FIRST OF YOUR KIND TO RAISE HAND OR WEAPON AGAINST ANOTHER IN UNTOLD EONS.
AND YOU--

-- PRIME MOVER FORGIVE YOU --
OH MY LORD! NOW THERE'S TWO OF THEM!
-- ARE THE SECOND!
POW!
WHAT KIND OF HORROR HAS MY HUSBAND'S MAD SCHEMES RELEASED?
WE'RE TAKIN' A BIG CHANCE, MR. FOX. WHAT IF THE WRONG PEOPLE SEE THIS BABY?
FOX 1
N1762R
MAYBE I HAD TO PLAY DUMB WITH THAT GUARD, ATWOOD, BUT YOU KNOW THE REAL IMPORTANCE OF SHAFT #27!
IT'S THE KEY TO EVERYTHING -- AND I'LL BE DAMNED IF I'LL LET ANYBODY OR ANYTHING ENDANGER IT!
"TO SEEK VENGEANCE WOULD BE TO BECOME AS MAD AS HE", THE ELDERS HAD SAID.
BUT THEY HAD NOT LOST THEIR MATES.
YET PERHAPS MADNESS HAS CLAIMED YOU AS WELL.
HOW ELSE COULD YOU POSSIBLY HAVE THOUGHT THAT A SINGLE BLOW WOULD DEFEAT YOUR FOE?

HOW ELSE COULD YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN THE FEROCITY--
-- THE SAVAGERY--
THAT SECOND CREATURE--
--THAT HAS ALLOWED HIM TO ESCAPE YOU--
WHY DO I FEEL HE'S TRYING TO HELP ME?
--FOR TEN CENTURIES--
--AND ACROSS A HUNDRED WORLDS.
WHAM!
ALAS, YOUR MADNESS IS NOT AS GREAT AS HIS.
THUS YOUR FALL BEFORE HIS ATTACK.
BUT THROUGH THE FOG THAT BEGINS TO DESCEND OVER YOUR MIND YOU HEAR THE WOMAN'S SCREAMS--
LET GO OF ME!
LET GO!
--AND THE MADNESS LEAVES YOU.
YOU PLUNGE INTO THE EARTH-WATERS AFTER HIM--
--NO LONGER DRIVEN BY A LUST FOR REVENGE.
INSTEAD, THERE IS ANOTHER NEED THAT HAMMERS AT YOU--
--FORCES YOU TO TAKE HIS MIGHTIEST BLOWS.
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU--

-- HE MUST NOT KILL AGAIN!
YOU BREAK FROM THIS STRUGGLE, FOR YOU HAVE BEEN SOMETHING YOU SHOULD HAVE REALIZED IMMEDIATELY.
HUMAN BEINGS ARE NOT AMPHIBIOUS.
THE WOMAN IS DROWNING.
YOU LEAVE YOUR MADNESS BELOW.
VENGEANCE CAN WAIT.
DEATH IS IMPATIENT.
THE PRIME MOVER HAS SMILED UPON YOU.
THIS PLACE IS FAMILIAR TO YOU.
THERE ARE OTHER HUMANS HERE--
--HUMANS WHO WILL--
--HELP YOU?
THE MONSTER'S BACK!
COME ON, YOU GUYS--
WASTE 'IM!
IF SHAFT #27 HAS BEEN DAMAGED, WE'RE ...
EXCUSE ME, MR. FOX. I'M GETTING A RADIO REPORT FROM THE CREW DOWN THERE.
THE MONSTER'S RETURNED -- CARRYING AN UNCONSCIOUS WOMAN!
THEN WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR, MAN?
GET THIS CRATE MOVING!

A THOUSAND YEARS! AND THEY HAVE NOT LOST THEIR FEAR.
BUT DO THEY FEAR AS WELL--
--THE FRAGILE BURDEN YOU CARRY?
THE QUESTION BECOMES ACADEMIC A MOMENT LATER AS THE WORLD EXPLODES AROUND YOU.
WAM!
YOUR WOULD-BE ATTACKERS ARE HURLED TO THE EARTH.
TWO OF THEM WILL NEVER RISE AGAIN.
ONLY YOUR SPACE-HARDENED SKIN--
-- PROTECTED THE WOMAN FROM THE FIRST BLAST.
YOU ARE NOT SURE YOU COULD SURVIVE A SECOND.
SHE NEEDS MEDICAL ATTENTION, BUT IT IS CLEAR THE HUMANS ARE INTERESTED ONLY IN DESTROYING YOU.
PERHAPS IF YOU LEAVE HER SIDE, THEY WILL DEIGN TO GIVE HER THE CARE SHE NEEDS.
GOOD GOD, MR. FOX! THOSE WERE OUR MEN YOU GOT IN THE BLAST!
I SAW THAT... THING NEAR SHAFT #27. I GUESS I LOST MY HEAD FOR A MINUTE.
LOOK-- SET ME DOWN NEAR THE MEN.
I'LL TELL THEM THE MISSLES FIRED ACCIDENTALLY.
WHEN THEY SEE THEIR BOSS RISKING HIS LIFE TO WARN THEM FROM THE AREA, THEY'LL BELIEVE ME.
I'LL PROBABLY GET A FEW POINTS IN THE LOYALTY DEPARTMENT TO BOOT.
WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO?
YOU GET BACK UP IN THE AIR--

"AND FINISH THAT MONSTER OFF!"
N17624
MY GOD!
THE FOOL IS STILL USING MISSILES!
CAN'T HE SEE HOW CLOSE HE IS TO--
--THE WELL!"
WHOOM
OIL: ONCE YOU WOULD HAVE STUDIED THIS SUBSTANCE IN MINUTEST DETAIL.
NOW YOU SIMPLY FLEE FROM ITS BURNING TOUCH--
--LEAVING THE HUMANS TO CLEAR AWAY THE RESULTS OF THEIR SENSELESS FEAR--
--AND GAIN WHATEVER WISDOM THEY MIGHT FROM THE CONTEMPLATION OF THIS DESTRUCTION.
SADLY IT WILL BE LITTLE.
"IT WAS HORRIBLE, DOC. ATWOOD'S COPTER SIMPLY DISAPPEARED!
"I TURNED AWAY FROM THE GLARE OF THE BLAST AND THEN I SAW THE WOMAN THE MONSTER HAD BEEN CARRYING.
"MY WIFE, DOCTOR!"
"THE DAMNED THING NEARLY KILLED MY WIFE!"

SHE'S NOT OUT OF DANGER YET, MR. FOX.
PHYSICALLY, HER INJURIES WERE SLIGHT.
BUT WE BOTH KNOW SHE'S BEEN UNDER A TREMENDOUS MENTAL STRAIN LATELY, AND I'M AFRAID--
--THE ADDITIONAL SHOCK OF BEING CAPTURED BY THAT..."MANPHIBIAN," THEY'RE CALLING IT--ALMOST DROWNING-- AND THEN GETTING CAUGHT IN THE OIL WELL EXPLOSION--
--MAY HAVE TRAUMITIZED HER COMPLETELY.
SHE MAY NEVER RECOVER FROM THE STATE SHE'S IN.
MY WIFE --BETH-- A VEGETABLE?
FOR THE REST OF HER LIFE?
WOLF
IT'S THE FAULT OF THAT DAMN CREATURE!
MANPHIBIAN! IT'S NOT A MAN -- IT'S A MONSTER!
AND WHEN I FIND IT--
--IT'LL BE A DEAD MONSTER!
THE SUPERFICIAL BURNS YOU SUFFERED IN THE OIL WELL EXPLOSION ARE HEALING RAPIDLY.
YOU ARE READY TO LET THE MADNESS CLAIM YOU AND CAST ASIDE THE BELIEFS YOUR RACE HAS FOLLOWED FOR EONS.
THE ELDERS SAY NO MAN MAY HARM HIS FELLOW MAN.
BUT THE ONE YOU SEEK IS NOT A MAN. HE IS BUT A FOUL MONSTER.
AND WHEN YOU FIND HIM--
--HE WILL BE A DEAD MONSTER.
FIN

by Don and Maggie Thompson

"Some are born monsters, some achieve monsterhood, and some have monsterdom thrust upon them."

Well, actually, Shakespeare was talking about greatness, not monsters, but it applies, it applies.

Look at Frankenstein's monster, for instance—he was "born" or built a monster, as were many other movieland monsters, from Rodan to crab monsters to Rosemary's baby.

Evil scientists are among those who work to achieve monsterdom—the Invisible Man and kindly Dr. Jekyll are among those whose endless hours among the beakers and retorts were repaid by malevolent madness instead of, as today, government grants.

The ones which seem most likely to create shudders in the audience are those poor lost souls who had monsterdom thrust upon them by a cruel fate, a moment of carelessness or, most chillingly, by an act of courage—as when Larry Talbot fought a werewolf to save its victim only to be infected by its bite. And Dracula may have been a fiendish, nasty man, but it was only after he was vampire-bitten that he became a nocturnal nemesis. Most of the vampires in films and literature were minding their own business when a sudden loss of blood thrust monsterdom upon them.

And, in addition to the old and familiar monstrous faces, there are some new entries to watch for...

*The biggest horror picture of the year may well be JAWS, in which a large shark terrorizes an oceanfront resort area. Richard Dreyfuss (star of THE APPRENTICESHIP OF DUDDY KRAVITZ and AMERICAN GRAFFITI) plays ichthyologist Matt Hooper, who comes to the resort to hunt the shark where it has been dining on the customers. The film, released in mid-June, was scaring preview audiences for months before that—preview audiences went wild at two really stunning moments in the film, according to reports. (Incidentally, the major advertising campaign is causing some behind-the-scenes controversy—Universal Pictures is asking theatres which book the film to pay the advertising bill.) Oh, you want to know *which* two moments? It's obvious when you see the movie...

*Were you shaken by EARTHQUAKE? Towa, one of the leading film distributors in Tokyo, has developed a new sound system called "Circum Sound" which magnifies sound effects with eight speakers placed in various parts of the theatre, instead of the four standard, four-channel systems. This system could make the audience even more a part of the movie. It'll be used in Towa's new release, DIABOLICA, in which the hissing and cursing of the devil will be heard from various parts of the theatre. If it goes over well in Tokyo, we may get to experience it in the United States and other countries.

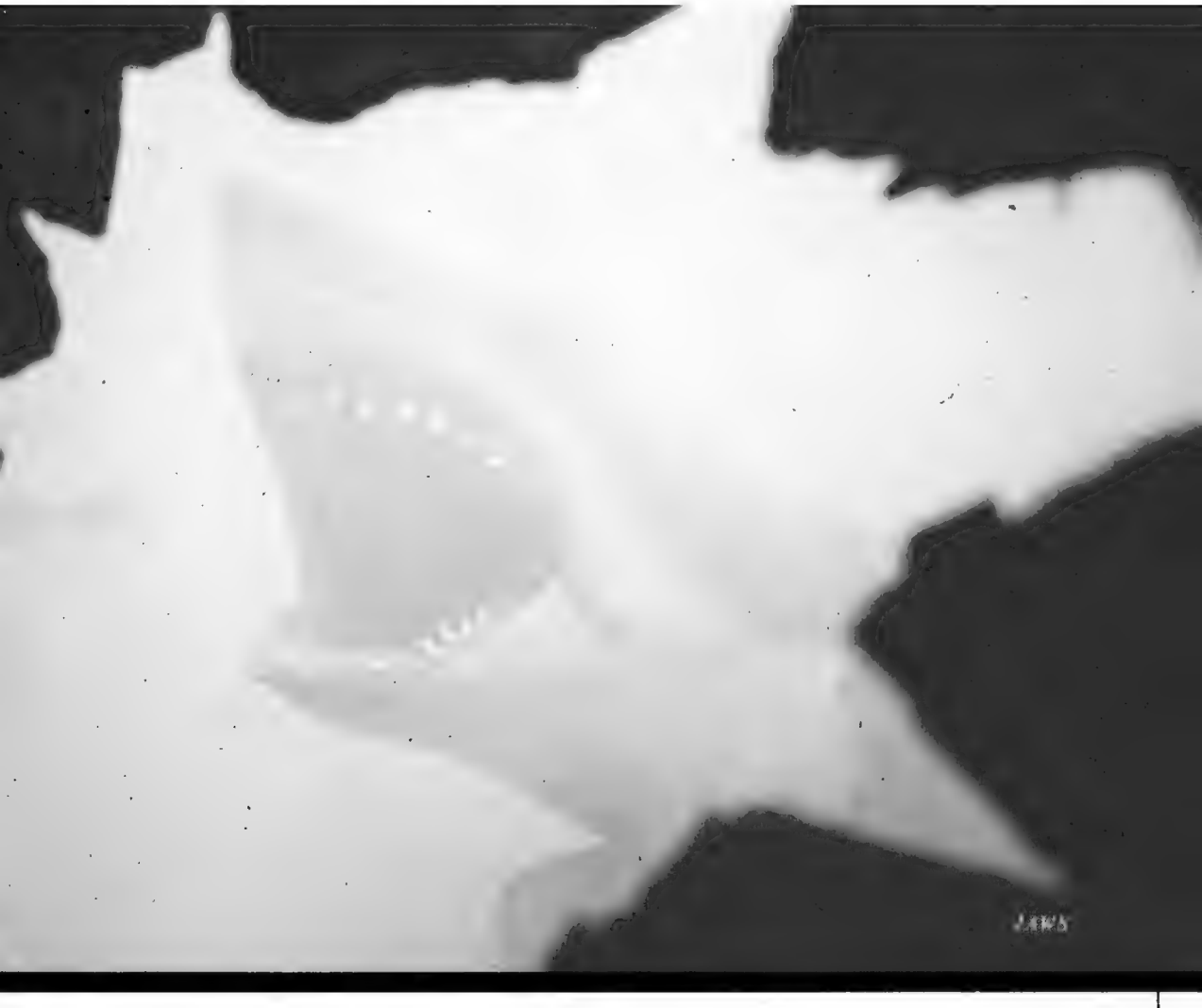
*William Friedkin, who directed THE EXORCIST, has sued Warner Brothers for $5,800,000 for fraud, usury and breach of contract, claiming that he is due $4,000,000 under the terms of his contract with WB for THE EXORCIST. Friedkin alleges that the film has grossed over $90,000,000 so far, with profits of $40,000,000 and that WB sent him incorrect auditing reports. Friedkin says his contract was for a flat fee of $325,000 plus 10% of the net profits. If Friedkin's figures are correct, there's a lot of money in Satanism.

*ROSEMARY'S BABY, the movie about Satanic goings-on in modern Manhattan, is being developed by CBS-TV into a television show to begin this fall—as an afternoon soap opera! It would be the second really spooky soap opera, the first being, of course, the classic DARK SHADOWS. Will the Devil achieve the popularity of vampire Barnabas Collins? We'll see.

*YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN, the Mel Brooks comedy, has already grossed more than $8,000,000—it will do far more than that by the time you read this. So Brooks and 20th Century Fox have signed a long-term contract for him to write, direct and produce at least three pictures over a five-year period. Probably none will be monster movies, but the first will be a silent film, and it's been years since there's been a new one of those.

*DAMNATION ALLEY, Roger Zelazny's science-fiction novel about a Hell's Angel type who rides across the United States—after an atomic war has made it a country of coast-to-coast monsters—is being produced for 20th Century Fox by Jerry Zeitman.

*Producer-director Don Siegel has assigned Richard



Alan Simmons to write the screenplay for Universal's THE SENTINEL, based on a book by Jeffrey Konvitz. The movie is supposed to be "in the genre of ROSEMARY'S BABY and THE EXORCIST" and filming starts this summer.

*DECEIT, Alfred Hitchcock's 53rd movie, stars Bruce Dern (star of SILENT RUNNING), Barbara Harris, Roy Thinnes, Karen Black (who starred in the TV movie TRILOGY OF TERROR), and Cathleen Nesbitt. DECEIT is a mystery, not a monster movie, in which two apparently unrelated stories are told, coming together in the end. We can't tell you much more about it because Hitchcock and screenwriter Ernest Lehman only used the novel RAINBIRD PATTERN by Victor Canning as a starting point—and Hitchcock is not telling anyone what it is about.

*Hans Holzer, assistant profesor of parapsychology at the New York Institute of Technology, has sold his book HEATHER: CONFESSIONS OF A WITCH to producers Dick Berg and Chuck Fries for an ABC-TV movie. Holzer says it's based on the true case of an Ohio girl initiated into a New York coven; she misused her powers until she learned not to do such things.

*VALERIE AND HER WEEK OF WONDERS is a movie made in 1970 in Czechoslovakia (as VALERIE A TYDEN DIVU) which has just been released in the United States. It involves a 13-year-old girl plunged into a blend of vampirism, witch-burning and puritanism.

*The first Hollywood movie to be shown in the People's Republic of China may be a horror film—IT'S ALIVE! The movie has been packing them in in Singapore and negotiations are underway to book it into China.

*The horror film THE REINCARNATION OF PETER PROUD has been doing very good business. When it was being shown in only eight cities, it ranked No. 12 on *Variety's* list of the fifty top-grossing films of the week ending April 16.

*Audience reaction at pre-release showing of American International Pictures' THE LAND THAT TIME FORGOT was good enough to send the studio back to other non-Tarzan books by Edgar Rice Burroughs in search of movie material before the film was even officially released. British science-fiction writer Michael Moorcock and British science-fiction artist James Cawthorn collaborated on the screenplay for LAND THAT TIME FORGOT, which stars Doug McClure, John McEnery and Susan Penhaligon. If you're lucky, you may be able to find a copy of MARVEL MOVIE PREMIERE, a black-and-white comic

YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN. Peter Boyle and Madeline Kahn.

YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN. Marty Feldman as Igor.

THE REINCARNATION OF PETER PROUD. Michael Sarrazin.

magazine which adapts the movie.

*Anita Doohan (one-time secretary to STAR TREK producer Gene Roddenberry) is co-producer of EMBRYO, about a test-tube baby. Dianne Ladd will star and Ralph Nelson will direct for Sandy Howard Productions.

**The Invisible Man* will be seen—uh, won't be seen—uh, will be a TV series on NBC this fall, starring David McCallum, who used to play the second lead in the fondly remembered *Man from U.N.C.L.E.* series. NBC officials liked the pilot film, a 90-minute TV movie, so much that they ordered five more scripts produced and put the series on the fall schedule before the TV movie was even broadcast. After making such a firm decision so quickly, the TV moguls started being indecisive about exactly when the series will be shown—they have moved it from Monday to Saturday and back to Monday so far; we won't venture a guess as to where it eventually will wind up. The movie (and, presumably, the series) is primarily adventure with special effects, with McCallum's Invisible Man far more of a superhero than a monster.

*The third Sinbad movie, tentatively titled SINBAD'S VOYAGE TO THE END OF THE WORLD was begun in March. The first two, naturally, were THE SEVENTH VOYAGE OF SINBAD and THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD. Ray Harryhausen is again doing the animation and spoke recently on the effect inflation is having on animation. Columbia Pictures is producing it.

BEHIND THE SCENES WITH THE INVISIBLE MAN

Special effects for *The Invisible Man* involve several different tricks, such as magnets to move items around on tables and counter tops, wires and stuff like that.

The basic effect that makes McCallum invisible, however, is created by covering him completely from head to foot in blue cloth, then filming him with a special filter which does not photograph blue things. That is how they do scenes of an unseen man putting on or taking off clothes, for instance.

One problem, of course, is that—since McCallum is rendered *unseen* but not actually *invisible*—anything he stands in front of will show his silhouette. That is why he is filmed on an empty set and then that film is superimposed on film of a room or outdoor set, with or without other actors. It also explains a part of McCallum's wardrobe—when invisible, he always puts on a turleneck sweater because its high collar hides the other side of his collar, which would be blacked out by his blue-wrapped head and neck. Extra fun can be derived from watching the movie by paying special attention to how they get around this limitation.

The other limitation in filming is that it is very hot in that blue wrapping and McCallum can't wear it very long at a time.

OUTSTANDING MONSTER NOVELS

After being out of print for several years, two of the best monster novels ever written are again available. One is the best vampire novel since *Dracula*, the other possibly the best werewolf novel ever written.

As it happens, both novels are by the same man, Leslie H. Whitten, best-known as the chief investigative reporter on the staff of Washington columnist Jack Anderson. Whitten recently wrote a non-fantasy novel, *The Alchemist*, which sold well enough to warrant bringing his earlier novels back into print.

Both novels are available in paperback from Avon Books at $1.50 each.

The vampire novel is *Progeny of the Adder*, in which modern-day Washington, D.C., is terrorized by a vampire. Well, he may be a vampire or he *may* be a man who *thinks* he is a vampire and who *acts* like a vampire and is as *hard to kill* as a vampire—it amounts to much the same thing after all—but the evidence that he is a real vampire is overwhelming by the end of the novel.

Except that this ten-year-old novel takes place in Washington instead of Las Vegas, the plot is remarkably similar to that of the original TV movie version of *The Night Stalker*, which came along much later. It certainly is a remarkable coincidence (Whitten has written that he thinks it may be more than a coincidence but *Night Stalker* author Jeff Rice has denied that anything more than coincidence is involved—read the book, see the movie and judge for yourself).

Dracula was the success it was because it took the legend of vampires, very old even then, and moved it into a then-modern city, London, giving the ancient horror relevance for a more sophisticated audience.

That is what Whitten did in *Progeny of the Adder*, bringing vampires into the mid-Twentieth Century in a disturbing and believable novel made even better by Whitten's thorogh knowledge of reporting and police work and his familiarity with Washington. (P.S.: Look for an adaptation of PROGENY in a near-future special Marvel magazine.)

Whitten's other horror novel, *Moon of the Wolf*, was made into a TV movie starring David Janssen, Barbara Rush and Bradford Dillman. While it had its moments and in some places was very good, the movie as a whole was bad, mostly because the cameras dwelled at much too great a length on the not-very-good werewolf makeup. It destroyed all the convincing buildup.

If you saw the TV movie, forget it and read the book.

As with *Progeny of the Adder*, the people in the book do not believe that a werewolf is traveling around a Mississippi town slaughtering people. Unlike *Progeny of the Adder*,, where the reader *can* consider the vampire to be a non-supernatural maniac (if the reader *really* works at explaining away the supernatural elements), there can be no doubt that *Moon of the Wolf* is about a real honest-to-Lawrence-Talbot werewolf.

Again, Whitten's familiarity with police methods and his ability to bring the small Mississippi town to life make the novel a winner.

(To our tastes, incidentally, *Progeny* is the better of the two books because it accomplishes more—it is harder to make the reader believe in a vampire in a modern large American city than it is to make him believe in a werewolf in a small country town. That is not to say that *Moon of the Wolf* is not a great novel—it is. But *Progeny of the Adder* is even better.

It seems we really do have legions of monsters available to us, doesn't it?

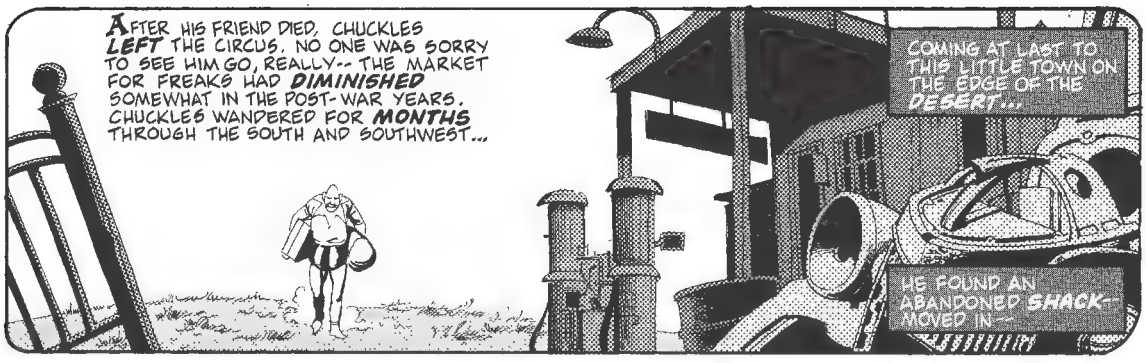
HEY, BE CAREFUL, PEE-WEE.
YEAH, YOU DON'T WANT TO KILL HIM!
AW, I KNOW WHAT I'M DOIN', HERE--WATCH!
WOW... LOOKIT HIM SQUIRM AROUND LIKE THAT!
HOW'D YA CATCH 'IM, PEE-WEE?
I PUT SOME SUGAR ON MY FINGER...
UH--HEY-Y-Y'SHOULDN'T A DONE THAT-- FLIES NEVER HURT YA...
WELL, WELL, IF IT AIN'T THE GARBAGE FREAK!
WHAT ARE YOU DOIN' IN TOWN, CHUCKLES?
THEY CALLED HIM CHUCKLES, AND THEY LAUGHED AT HIM... AT FIRST BEHIND HIS BACK, AND THEN, AS THEY GREW OLDER, IN FRONT OF HIM, AS WELL. AFTER ALL, CHUCKLES LOVED ALL LIVING THINGS, DIDN'T HE? EVEN SUCH UGLY ONES AS...
THE FLIES!
UH... PLEEZE... DON'T HIRT HIM ANY MORE...
LET ME... UH... TAKE HIM HOME? CAN I...? PLEEEZE!
JIM'S

Script: GERRY CONWAY Art & Plot: PAUL KIRSCHNER and RALPH REESE

I DON'T RIGHTLY KNOW, CHUCKLES -- WHAT YOU GONNA GIVE US FOR HIM? A ONE-WINGED FLY IS PRETTY VALUABLE, Y'KNOW...
HOW ABOUT SOME OF THAT GARBAGE YOU COLLECTED FOR THAT HUT OF YOURS OUT ON THE OLD DESERTED HIGHWAY?
TOM'S
SURE, WE'LL TRADE THE FLY FOR YOUR PICKIN'S, CHUCKLES. THAT'S FAIR, NOW AIN'T IT?
UH... ALL OF IT? EVEN... EVEN THE TEA BAGS?
... STILL GOT JUICE IN 'EM!
TEA
YEP, EVEN THE TEA BAGS, CHUCKLES... EVERYTHING.
OH... OKAY... JUST DON'T HIRT HIM NO MORE...
CHUCKLES HAD ALWAYS BEEN ALONE, AS LONG AS HE COULD REMEMBER. HE NEVER HAD MUCH IN THE WORLD...
AND WHAT HE DID HAVE, HE NEVER KEPT VERY LONG
HEY, CHUCKLES... YA GOT YOUR FLY, BUT YA FORGOT SOMETHIN...
YEAH... WE WOULDN'T WANT YA TO LEAVE WITHOUT IT...
TEA
SPLUCH!
ALL YOUR CRUMMY GARBAGE!
HAHAHAHAHA!

MOST OF THE TIME, CHUCKLES DIDN'T MIND THEIR TAUNTS; HE'D GROWN USED TO CRUELTY, THOUGH HE'D NEVER UNDERSTOOD IT. BUT SOMETIMES, HE DID MIND... SOMETIMES, THE CHILDREN MADE HIM ANGRY...
...FOR WHAT THEY WOULD DO TO THE FLIES.
DON'T WORRY. YOU'RE SAFE AT LAST.
NOBODY'LL HIRT YOU AGIN...
'CAUSE NOW YOU'VE GOT FRIENDS!
HE LOVED ALL LIVING THINGS, IT WAS TRUE, BUT HE LOVED THE FLIES ESPECIALLY.
THEY WERE HATED AS HE WAS HATED... AND THEY WERE VICTIMS OF CRUELTY, AS HE WAS A VICTIM.
FOR THIS REASON, HE TOOK CARE OF THEM-- GAVE THEM FOOD...
PERFORMED DELICATE SURGERY WITH HANDS THAT WOULD'VE ASTOUNDED ANY TRUE SURGEON...
AND, MOST OF ALL, LOVED THEM.

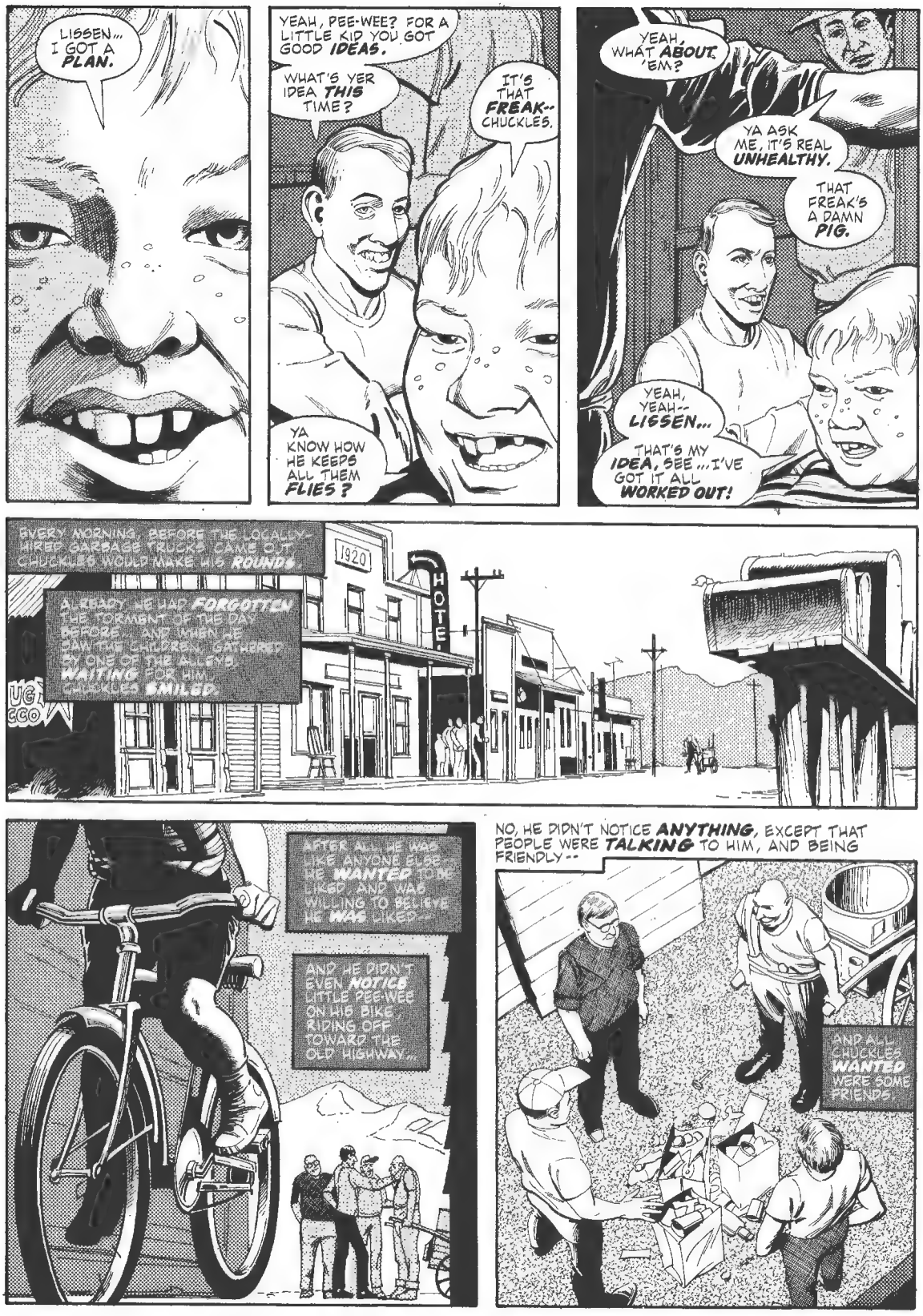
-- AND IN HIS HEART, CHUCKLES WAS CONVINCED THEY LOVED HIM BACK.
A COUPLE DAYS REST, YOU BE FINE AGAIN. PROFESSOR THOMPSON TAUGHT ME HOW TO MAKE YOU WELL.
I ALWAYS DO IT, JUST LIKE PROFESSOR THOMPSON SAID.
HE REMEMBERS THEN: THE CIRCUS, WHERE HE GREW UP AFTER HIS PARENTS DIED.
EVERYONE LAUGHED AT HIM THERE, TOO!.. ALL EXCEPT THE PROFESSOR, WHO RAN THE CIRCUS FLY SHOW.
PROFESSOR THOMPSON DIDN'T ENJOY... NOT EVEN WHEN THEY PAID CHUCKLES IN THE FREAK SHOW, AND CHARGED PEOPLE ADMISSION TO SEE HIM. TO THE PROFESSOR, HE WAS A GENIUS, A KIND MAN. HE TREATED CHUCKLES LIKE A HUMAN BEING... HE GAVE CHUCKLES RESPECT...
ZING
PINHEAD
FREAK
20¢
AND WHEN THE PROFESSOR DIED, CHUCKLES CRIED...
BECAUSE IF I KNEW HE'D NEVER FIND A FRIEND LIKE THE PROFESSOR AGAIN.
PROFESSOR R. STONE
CIRCUS


AFTER HIS FRIEND DIED, CHUCKLES LEFT THE CIRCUS. NO ONE WAS SORRY TO SEE HIM GO, REALLY-- THE MARKET FOR FREAKS HAD DIMINISHED SOMEWHAT IN THE POST-WAR YEARS. CHUCKLES WANDERED FOR MONTHS THROUGH THE SOUTH AND SOUTHWEST...
COMING AT LAST TO THIS LITTLE TOWN ON THE EDGE OF THE DESERT...
HE FOUND AN ABANDONED SHACK-- MOVED IN--

...AND IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS, MADE THE ACQUAINTANCE OF THE LOCAL TOWNSFOLK...
I TOLD YA, I DIDN'T WANT YA COMIN' INTA MY STORE--
YA DAMNED FREAK!
...AND PROVED NO MORE TOLERANT THAN THE PEOPLE AT THE CIRCUS...

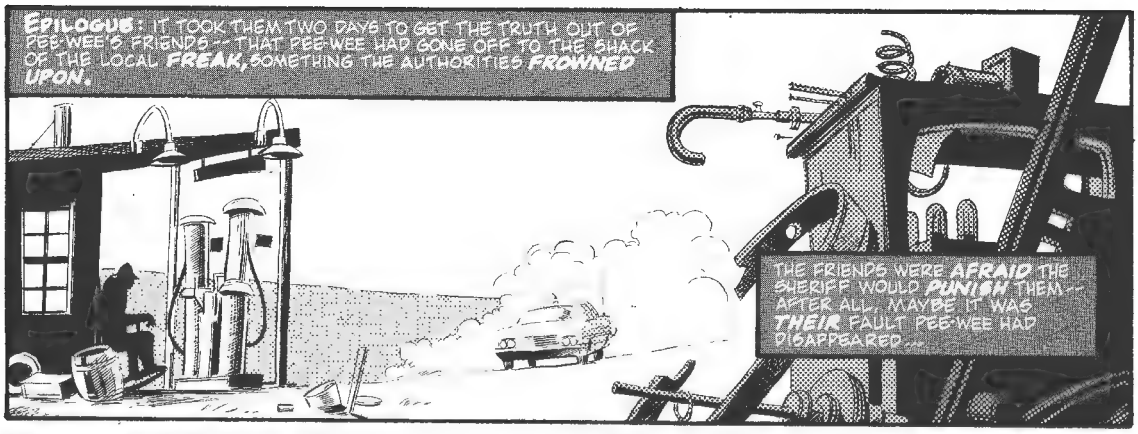
...AND PERHAPS JUST A LITTLE MORE CRUEL.
LOOKEE HERE-- IT'S THAT PIN-HEAD.
AIN'T THAT DISGUSTIN'-- THE WAY HE'S PICKIN' OVER THE GARBAGE LIKE THAT?
SOMEBODY OUGHTA TEACH HIM A LESSON--

EVEN SO, AFTER THE WAY THE CHILDREN TREATED HIM, CHUCKLES DIDN'T HATE THEM.


LISSEN... I GOT A PLAN.
YEAH, PEE-WEE? FOR A LITTLE KID YOU GOT GOOD IDEAS.
WHAT'S YER IDEA THIS TIME?
IT'S THAT FREAK-- CHUCKLES.
YA KNOW HOW HE KEEPS ALL THEM FLIES?
YEAH, WHAT ABOUT 'EM?
YA ASK ME, IT'S REAL UNHEALTHY.
THAT FREAK'S A DAMN PIG.
YEAH, YEAH-- LISSEN...
THAT'S MY IDEA, SEE... I'VE GOT IT ALL WORKED OUT!
EVERY MORNING, BEFORE THE LOCALLY-HIRED GARBAGE TRUCKS CAME OUT CHUCKLES WOULD MAKE HIS ROUNDS
ALREADY, HE HAD FORGOTTEN THE TORMENT OF THE DAY BEFORE... AND WHEN HE SAW THE CHILDREN, GATHERED BY ONE OF THE ALLEYS, WAITING FOR HIM CHUCKLES SMILED.
1920
HOTE
AFTER ALL, HE WAS LIKE ANYONE ELSE-- HE WANTED TO BE LIKED, AND WAS WILLING TO BELIEVE HE WAS LIKED--
AND HE DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE LITTLE PEE-WEE ON HIS BIKE, RIDING OFF TOWARD THE OLD HIGHWAY...
NO, HE DIDN'T NOTICE ANYTHING, EXCEPT THAT PEOPLE WERE TALKING TO HIM, AND BEING FRIENDLY--
AND ALL CHUCKLES WANTED WERE SOME FRIENDS.

BOY, THIS SURE IS SOME DUMP, AIN'T IT. CAN'T HARDLY BELIEVE HE LIVES HERE, BUT I GUESS A FREAK LIKE HIM'LL LIVE ANYWHERE.
PHEW! SMELLS LIKE A DUMP!
HEY-- WILLYA LOOKIT THAT! HE MUST HAVE A MILLION ZILLION FLIES IN HERE!
YESSIR, WE'RE GONNA HAVE SOME FUN!
CHUCKLES DIDN'T KNOW WHAT WAS HAPPENING BACK AT HIS SHACK ... HE DIDN'T EVEN THINK ABOUT IT.
PLENTY MORE GARBAGE WHERE THIS CAME FROM, CHUCKLES...
FROM NOW ON, ALL THE GARBAGE IN THE CITY IS YOURS, CHUCKLES.
WEAR IT IN GOOD HEALTH!
THEY LIKED HIM ... THEY LIKED HIM!
FOR CHUCKLES, IT WAS AS THOUGH THE WORLD HAD SUDDENLY TURNED TO GOLD.
AS HE TURNED TO GO BACK TO HIS TIDY LITTLE SHACK, HIS MIND WAS OVERFLOWING WITH JOY...

-- A JOY THAT TURNED TO HORROR WHEN HE ARRIVED AT HIS SHACK A FEW MINUTES LATER AND FOUND--
THE FLIES!
YOU'RE HIRTING THEM-- YOU'RE HIRTING THEM!
THEY NEVER HIRT YOU... NEVER HIRT ANYBODY!
YA BIG GOON, THEY'RE JUST A BUNCH'A SMELLY FLIES.
SO I PULLED THEIR WINGS OFF-- SO BIG DEAL! WHAT'RE YOU GOING TO DO TA ME ?
YOU'RE JUST AN UGLY JERK-- A FREAK, UNDERSTAND?
YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A CRUMMY FREAK--
HEY! WHAT'RE YA DOIN'? LET GO OF ME--
LET GO OF ME, YA CREEP!
SOMETHING BURNED BEHIND CHUCKLES' EYES-- A KIND OF MADNESS, A KIND OF FIRE PEE-WEE HAD NEVER SEEN BEFORE.
IT FRIGHTENED PEE-WEE-- IT MADE HIM WANT TO SCREAM--! AND AFTER WHAT CHUCKLES DID NEXT--
--PEE-WEE DID SCREAM-- LONG AND LOUD!
YAAAAGGHH
YOU HIRT CHUCKLES' FRIENDS--
NOW-- CHUCKLES WILL HIRT YOU!


EPILOGUE: IT TOOK THEM TWO DAYS TO GET THE TRUTH OUT OF PEE-WEE'S FRIENDS -- THAT PEE-WEE HAD GONE OFF TO THE SHACK OF THE LOCAL FREAK, SOMETHING THE AUTHORITIES FROWNED UPON.
THE FRIENDS WERE AFRAID THE SHERIFF WOULD PUNISH THEM -- AFTER ALL, MAYBE IT WAS THEIR FAULT PEE-WEE HAD DISAPPEARED...

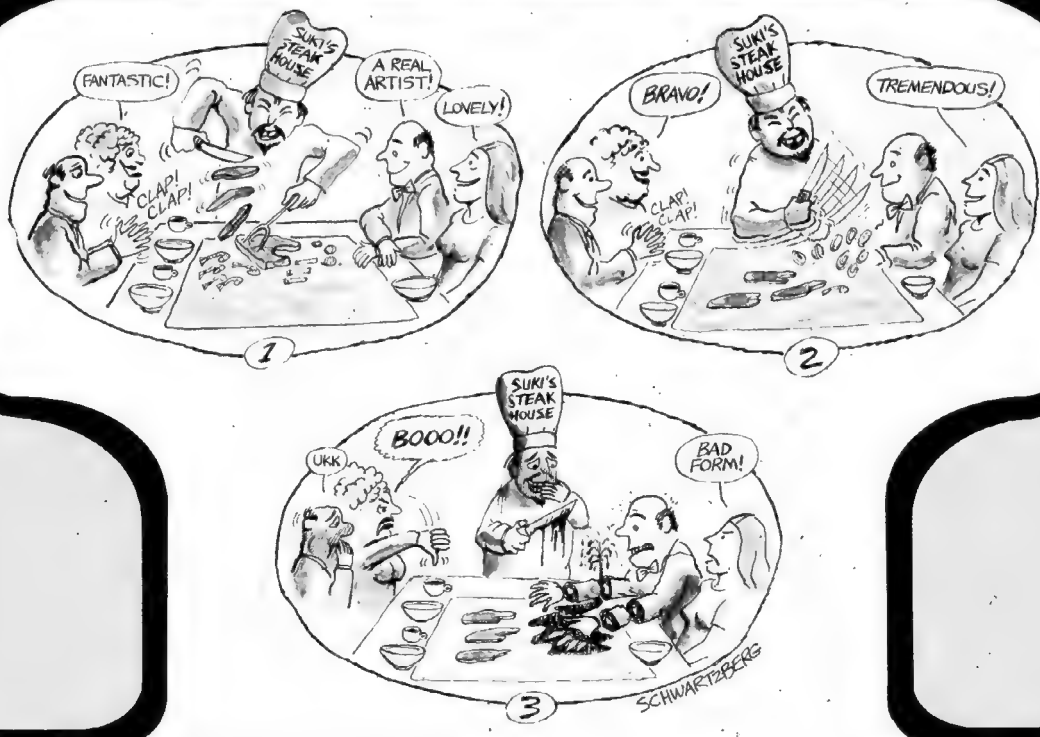
BUT THE SHERIFF DIDN'T CARE ABOUT PUNISHING ANYONE, HE ONLY WANTED TO FIND THE LOST KID... AND IF THIS FREAK MIGHT KNOW THE KID'S WHEREABOUTS...
THEN, HELL, HE'D JUST HAVE TO ASK THE FREAK.
MIND IF I HAVE A WORD WITH YA, FELLA?
STATE
POLICE

TALKING SMOOTHLY AND SIMPLY, THE SHERIFF EXPLAINED ABOUT THE MISSING BOY... AND WHEN HE WAS DONE, HE WAITED...
AND THE FREAK SMILED...
CHUCKLES KNOWS PEE-WEE. PEE-WEE GOT HIRT-- BUT CHUCKLES FIXED HIM--

CHUCKLES KNOWS HOW TO FIX THINGS -- THE PROFESSOR TAUGHT HIM--
CHOKE!

- JUST LIKE HE FIXES FLIES!
FIN

MONSTER MADNESS



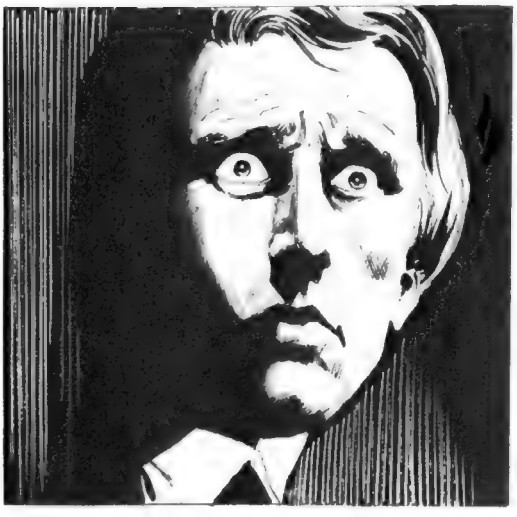
"Oh . . . that *Dr. Jekyll!*"

Script & Art: STU SCHWARTZBERG

DRACULA
ADAPTED FROM BRAM STOKER'S TALE OF TERROR
BY
ROY THOMAS
WRITER
AND
DICK GIORDANO
ARTIST
THE STORY SO FAR:
Jonathan Harker, solicitor, traveled from England to the heart of the mystery-shrouded Carpathian Mountains, to explain the purchase of a London estate to a foreign nobleman—Count Dracula, of Transylvania.
He was startled to find the towers and battlements of Castle Dracula in a state of virtual ruin, as if abandoned for many years.

In the beginning, the Count was a charming host, eager to learn all he could about England, to which he soon intended to travel.

The first unusual thing which Harker noticed was that the Count was seen only at night, and always claimed to be away from the castle on business during the daylight hours.



Then, slowly, horrifyingly, one locked door after another led Harker to an inescapable, terrible conclusion:

Castle Dracula was a veritable prison . . . and he, its prisoner.

Soon, Harker began to learn other things, as well.

He began to feel he was safe only because of the crucifix, given him by an old woman of Bistritz, which he wore around his neck.

Twice he beheld the Count leave the castle by climbing down its sheer sides, face forward, as a lizard might move along a wall.

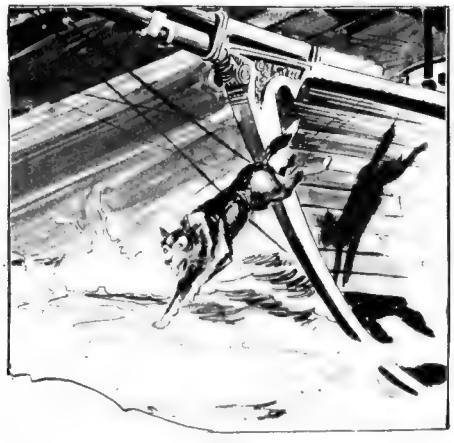
And then . . . he discovered that he was not alone in the castle, as he had thought.

Count Dracula saved Harker from the ravenous she-fiends, yet Harker could not help but feel it was only because he had a more horrible fate in store for him.

Then, he learned that Count Dracula was making plans to leave for England . . . but that he himself was to be left behind in the castle, to the mercy of the three weird women.

In desperation, he climbed precariously down part of the castle's steep side, to find Dracula.
And find him he did . . . asleep in newly-dug earth in one of many coffins in the nether part of the castle.
He now knew, of a certainty, that Dracula was—a **vampire**.
Striking the monster—but not fatally—he fled in terror, intending to make his way to the ground, hand over hand. And if he should fall—well, even such an end would be better than what the fiends of Castle Dracula had in store for his immortal soul!

There were other things, as well. The large dog which had jumped ashore and fled, the moment the ship had beached.



The death of poor old **Mr. Swales**, the retired sailor, dead with a look in his eyes as if, in dying, he had looked upon the face of death itself.

At Dr. Seward's asylum, one of the patients, **Renfield**, spoke wildly of "the coming of the Master" when he escaped once and fled in vain to deserted old Carfax Abbey nearby.

Then there was Lucy's sleepwalking—and the shadowed man whom Mina thought she saw when she went out into the night to bring her home.

Poor Lucy seemed to grow paler, almost day by day . . . and the strange marks on her throat worried Mina, who could not identify them.

But then, word came that her Jonathan was alive, and recovering from a violent brain fever in a Budapest hospital.

On August 21, Mina departed for the Continent to join and marry the man she loved.

But still, she wished that her dear friend Lucy were not so very pale and wan. . . .

Soon after, at Whitby, on the English coast, Miss **Mina Murray**—Jonathan Harker's fiancee—was visiting her good friend **Lucy Westenra**, who was lately given to fits of sleepwalking.

Perhaps, Mina reasoned, it was only because she had recently been proposed to by two men—Dr. **John Seward**, who ran the nearby lunatic asylum, and Mr. **Quincy P. Morris** of Texas—only to accept a third, her beloved **Arthur Holmwood**, the future **Lord Godalming**.

But, strange things were afoot in Whitby.

First, a ship ran aground there during a storm, with no human aboard save its dead captain—who had tied himself to the wheel.

The captain's log told of an eerie apparition aboard ship, who had slain all but the captain—who had been protected by a cross till the last.

LETTER:
MINA HARKER
TO
LUCY WESTENRA
Budapest, 29 August
My dear Lucy—
I know you will be anxious to hear all that has happened since we parted two weeks ago at Whitby.
Arriving here, I met good Sister Agatha, who has been caring for my beloved Jonathan.
But she could tell me little except that Jonathan seems to have had some terrible shock, which might well destroy him, should he try to recall it...
He has given me his journal of the past few months to read if I will when I will...
And now, though he is still bed-ridden, we may have been married at last.
Oh, Lucy, dear friend... can anything mar my perfect happiness?
Yet, even as I write these words, I sense the nearness of a dark, deep shadow... as if it lurks at my shoulder, ever just out of sight.
I turn, and it is gone... and I know then that my doubts, my fears are foolish things...
Still, I shall be happy only when we have left this dreadful country far behind, and have returned to England...
CHAPTER VII
DEATH BE THOU PROUD!

-DR. SEWARD'S DIARY-
(KEPT IN PHONOGRAPH)
--3 September.
At the request of ARTHUR HOLMWOOD, who is my friend and her FIANCÉ, I have been keeping a careful though unobtrusive watch on MISS LUCY.
This afternoon, I came upon her in seeming BRIGHT SPIRITS, for she was reading a letter from MINA HARKER...
I thought surely she must have HEARD me enter the room, yet when I laid my HAND upon her shoulder--
OHHH! LORD IN HEAVEN-- NO--!
?
I'M...SORRY IF I STARTLED YOU, MISS WESTENRA. YOUR MOTHER SHOWED ME IN, AND I ASSUMED...
IT'S I WHO SHOULD APOLOGIZE, DR. SEWARD.
I WAS SO IM-MERSED IN THIS LETTER...
GOD! she tried to be CHEERFUL, but she was so deathly PALE...!
I would have BLURTED OUT as much, but for her ailing MOTHER'S presence.
As it was, I simply said...
I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND...
BUT, AT ARTHUR'S REQUEST, I HAVE BROUGHT A DOCTOR TO...EXAM-INE YOU.
THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH ME, DR. SEWARD. IF DEAR ARTHUR HAD NOT BEEN CALLED TO HIS POOR FATHER'S SIDE, HE WOULD BE HERE TO SEE THAT.
YET, FOR HIS SAKE-- PLEASE SHOW THE GENTLEMAN IN.
MISS LUCY WESTENRA, MAY I PRESENT...
DR. ABRAHAM VAN HELSING, WHO HAS JOURNEYED HERE FROM AMSTERDAM AT AUTHUR'S AND MY REQUEST.
ONCE, I WAS PROUD TO CALL DR. VAN HELSING MY TEACHER; NOW, I AM EVEN PROUD-ER TO CALL HIM MY FRIEND.
I'M VERY PLEASED TO MEET YOU, DOCTOR... THOUGH I FEAR YOU'VE MADE YOUR LONG JOURNEY FOR NOTHING.
MY DEAR YOUNG MISS... I HAVE THE SO-GREAT PLEASURE OF BEING YOUR MOST HUMBLE SERVANT.
AND, I AM SURE THAT YOU ARE QUITE RIGHT...BUT WE MUST HUMOR THESE YOUNG MEN, MUST WE NOT?
WITHOUT THEIR YOUNG LADIES TO FRET OVER... WHATEVER WOULD THEY DO WITH THEMSELVES?

At that point, Dr. Van Helsing NODDED to me... a pre-arranged signal that I should take MRS. WESTENRA out of the room. For we knew full well the elder woman's health is not of the best...
Now, we had to learn about Miss Lucy, as well...
DR. SEWARD HAS HIS MADMEN TO PLAY WITH. BUT HE DOES NOT UNDERSTAND THE YOUNG.
THE YOUNG DO NOT UNBURDEN THEMSELVES TO THE YOUNG-- BUT TO THE OLD, LIKE ME, EH?
SO, WE SHALL TALK, YOU AND I-- AFTER I'VE TAKEN YOUR PULSE.

Nervously, I was strolling about in the GARDEN-- when, presently, the professor came to the window...
YOU MAY COME IN NOW, DR. SEWARD. I HAVE EXAMINED THE YOUNG MISS...
...AND SHE IS QUITE ALL RIGHT.
And, though I had lost Lucy Westenra's love to my friend ARTHUR, still my head raced at his words.

Yet, when we were ALONE, just before he departed...
I MUST GO BACK HOME AND THINK.
YOU MUST SEND ME THE TELEGRAM EVERY DAY-- THAT I MAY COME AGAIN, IF THERE BE CAUSE.
CAUSE? BUT--YOU SAID--
I SAID WHAT I SAID--THAT THE YOUNG MISS MIGHT BE CHEERED.
DO NOT FORGET, MY FRIEND-- THE TELEGRAM, EACH AND EVERY DAY!

-A September Renfield had had another outburst--at precisely the stroke of NOON!
It took several attendants simply to HOLD him.

Within five minutes, however, he became quite SUBDUED...
ALL OVER! HE HAS DESERTED ME.
NO HOPE FOR ME NOW... UNLESS I DO IT MYSELF.
DR. SEWARD...
YES, MR. RENFIELD?

WON'T YOU PLEASE LET ME HAVE A LITTLE MORE SUGAR?
I THINK IT WOULD BE VERY GOOD FOR ME.

AND THE FLIES YOU CATCH?
YES! THE FLIES LIKE IT, TOO--AND I LIKE THE FLIES--
THEREFORE, I LIKE IT.
HERE, PRETTY FLY...!

INTERNATIONAL CABLE
Van Helsing
4 September- Patient still better today.
Seward
INTERNATIONAL CABLE
Van Helsing
5 September- Patient greatly improved. Good appetite; sleeps naturally; good spirits; colour coming back.
Seward
INTERNATIONAL CABLE
Van Helsing
6 September- Terrible change for the worse. Come at once; do not lose an hour. I hold over telegram to Holmwood till I have seen you.
Seward
-7 SEPTEMBER.--Dr. Van Helsing arrived.
THE SAME AS BEFORE, PROFESSOR --BUT WORSE.
WHAT ARE HER SYMPTOMS, FRIEND JOHN?
NATURALLY, I'VE NOT TOLD MRS. WESTENRA.
GOOD! THEN I SHALL EXAMINE OUR YOUNG MISS. I HAVE COME PREPARED, AND-- GOOD LORD!
IT--CAN'T BE--!
SHE WILL NEED A TRANSFUSION OF BLOOD-- AT ONCE!
If I was SHOCKED when I saw her yesterday, I was HORRIFIED today!
She was GHASTLY PALE, the red gone even from her lips and gums; the BONES in her face stood out prominently, and her BREATHING was painful to hear.
I knew INSTANTLY what had to be done...
I AM THE YOUNGER OF US TWO, PROFESSOR.
IT MUST BE ME!
NO, JOHN--IT MUST BE ME!
ARTHUR! ARTHUR HOLMWOOD! YOU--HERE?
AND WHERE SHOULD I BE--
--BUT AT THE SIDE OF MY FIANCEE?
YOUR LETTERS BETRAYED YOU, OLD FRIEND... SO I CAME AT ONCE!
YOU HAVE COME IN TIME, SIR...
I KNOW YOU ARE TIRED FROM YOUR JOURNEY--
BUT YOU CAN HELP THE YOUNG MISS, MORE THAN ANY THAT LIVE!
TELL ME WHAT I MUST DO--AND I SHALL DO IT!

MY LIFE IS HERS-- AND I WOULD GIVE THE LAST DROP OF BLOOD IN MY BODY FOR HER!
MY YOUNG SIR, I DO NOT ASK SO MUCH AS THAT--
--NOT THE LAST.
COME! YOU ARE A MAN-- AND IT IS A MAN WE WANT.
YOU ARE BETTER THAN ME-- BETTER THAN MY FRIEND JOHN.
YOUNG MISS IS BAD, VERY BAD. SHE WANTS BLOOD-- AND BLOOD SHE MUST HAVE, OR DIE.
DR. VAN HELSING-- SHE'S SO STILL-- SHE--
SHE BUT SLEEPS.
AND WHILE SHE DOES, YOUR FRESH YOUNG BLOOD SHALL HELP HER MUCH!
When the transfusion was finished...
NOW, FRIEND JOHN--
TAKE DOWN OUR BRAVE YOUNG SIR, GIVE HIM OF THE PORT WINE, AND LET HIM LIE DOWN A WHILE.
BUT, MIND YOU-- SAY NOTHING TO MADAME!
THERE MUST BE NO SHOCK-- YOU KNOW HOW IT IS WITH HER HEART.
When I returned, Lucy was sleeping more GENTLY... breathing more EASILY...
THAT MARK ON HER THROAT! WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF IT, PROFESSOR?
WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF IT?
I HAVE NEVER SEEN IT BEFORE-- SO I'VE NEVER EXAMINED IT.
THEN DO SO, PLEASE...
...WELL?
I CAN MAKE NOTHING OF IT.
IT LOOKS LIKE A WOUND-- BUT IF IT WERE, THE BED WOULD BE DRENCHED WITH THE BLOOD SHE'S LOST. WHAT DO YOU--?
I MUST GO BACK TO AMSTERDAM TONIGHT--TO CONSULT CERTAIN BOOKS.
YOU MUST REMAIN HERE ALL THE NIGHT-- AND KEEP WATCH OVER YOUNG MISS.
SHALL I HAVE A NURSE?
NO! BUT REMEMBER-- SHE IS YOUR CHARGE. IF YOU LEAVE HER SIDE, AND HARM BEFALLS--
--YOU SHALL NOT SLEEP EASY HEREAFTER!

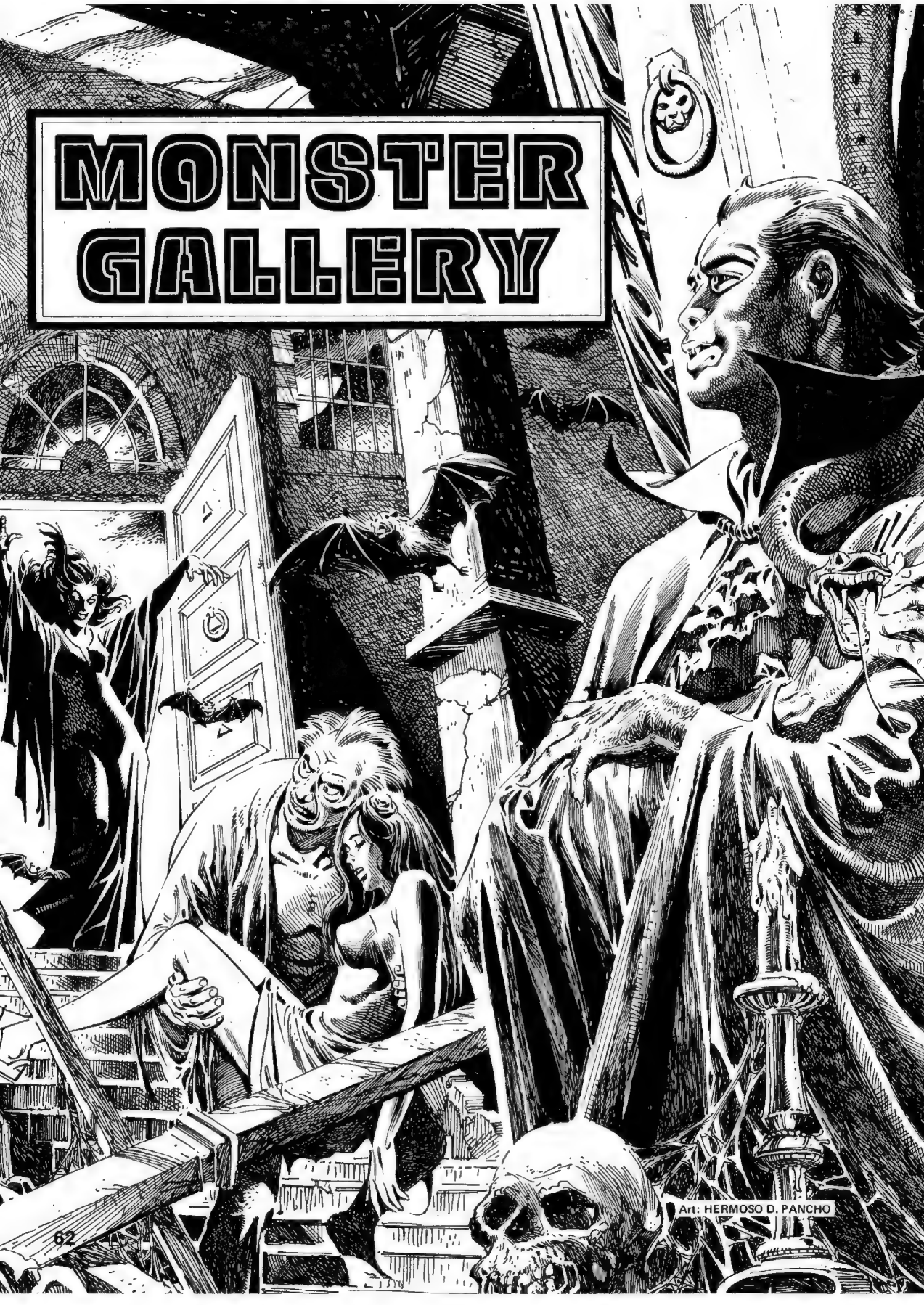
-10 September. Between the asylum and the Westenra home, I was exhausted after three nights of sitting with Lucy. She, in cheerful spirits, seemed to notice my weariness...
I WISH YOU WOULD NOT SIT UP WITH ME TONIGHT, DR. SEWARD. I'M REALLY QUITE WELL AGAIN.
YES. BUT, I... PROMISED DR. VAN HELSING...
THAT GENTLE OLD MAN...!
WELL, WATCH IF YOU MUST. BUT FOR MY PART, I SHALL SLEEP WELL TONIGHT.
I FEEL AS IF THE ONE I LOVE... WERE VERY CLOSE TO ME.
...SO... VERY... CLOSE...
Within a few minutes, she had fallen ASLEEP, which is the best way for her to regain her STRENGTH.
I, too, must have dozed off...
For, I remember NOTHING...
...till I felt the PROFESSOR'S HAND on my shoulder, and I awoke in a SECOND.
HOW IS YOUR PATIENT?
WELL, I THINK.
I'LL RAISE THE BLIND, AND YOU SHALL SEE FOR YOURSEL--
Then, as the MORNING SUNLIGHT flooded the room, I heard Van Helsing's exclamation of Horror--
GOTT IN HIMMEL!
There on the bed lay poor Lucy, more horribly WHITE than ever!
Even her LIPS were white, and the gums seemed to have shrunken back from the teeth, as we sometimes see in a CORPSE after a prolonged illness.

Van Helsing lost NO TIME in acting...!
TOO LATE! HER PULSE STILL BEATS, THOUGH FEEBLY.
IT IS NOT
ALL OUR WORK IS UNDONE! WE MUST BEGIN AGAIN.
AND THIS TIME--IT MUST BE YOU, FRIEND JOHN!
No man knows, till he experiences it, what it is to feel his own LIFE-BLOOD drawn away into the veins of the WOMAN HE LOVES, albeit from afar...
AHH...THAT WILL DO.
ALREADY? YOU TOOK MUCH MORE FROM ARTHUR...!
YOU HAVE MUCH OTHER WORK TO DO--FOR HER, AND FOR OTHERS.
GO REST NOW, TILL I COME TO YOU.
YES, PROFESSOR...
Lucy SLEPT well into the day. When she woke, she seemed quite UNAWARE of what had happened...
I'M GLAD YOU ARE BETTER, YOUNG MISS.
BUT-- DOCTOR--
NOW, THESE ARE FOR YOU...!
SURELY, YOU ARE ONLY JOKING WITH ME!
I NEVER JEST! THEY ARE THE BEST MEDICINE YOU CAN HAVE!
WHY, THESE FLOWERS ARE ONLY--COMMON GARLIC!
MEDICINE? BUT-- THEY SMELL SO--!
AS THE BEST MEDICINES SO OFTEN DO, MISS LUCY.
I SHALL HANG THEM IN YOUR WINDOW-- LIKE SO--
--AND THIS WREATH SHALL GO ABOUT YOUR NECK, SO THAT YOU SLEEP WELL.
YOU MUST PROMISE ME THAT YOU WILL NOT DISTURB IT--
AND EVEN IF THE ROOM FEELS CLOSE TONIGHT, DO NOT OPEN EITHER WINDOW OR DOOR!
I... PROMISE...!

– LUCY WESTENRA'S DIARY –
17 September. I have taken of late to keeping this diary, in the manner of dear Mina. At last I have regained strength enough to write in it again...
How good everyone is to me! I quite love that dear Dr. Van Helsing, despite the smelly garlic which now infests my room.
What its medicinal use can be, I cannot fathom. But I trust in him and am secure.
Still, I awaken at least twice a night – to the sound of something flapping almost angrily against my window-panes.
At first I thought it must be the boughs of the great tree just outside...
But it might also have been the large bat I saw flitting away, as if with some purpose all its own.
How silly I grow, so late at night! To ascribe human intentions to a poor, dumb beast!
It must be the terrible struggle I have had against sleep lately – the fear of the unknown horrors it has held for me –
– which I will never quite remember upon waking!
Yet, tonight, I do not dread being alone as I grow drowsy.
Perhaps the dear professor's garlic is doing some good after all!
There is peace in its scent; already, I feel sleep stealing upon me... sweet sleep...

-DR. SEWARD'S DIARY-
(Kept in phonograph)
-morning of 13 September--
PROFESSOR, I KNOW YOU ALWAYS HAVE A REASON FROM WHATEVER YOU DO--
INDEED I DO.
YET, YOUR ACTIONS PUZZLE ME.
THEY SEEM ALMOST AS IF YOU ARE WORKING SOME SORT OF SPELL TO WARD OFF AN EVIL SPIRIT.
PERHAPS I AM, FRIEND JOHN...
PERHAPS I AM.
AH. WE ARE THERE!
GOOD MORNING TO YOU, MY DEAR MRS. WESTENRA.
AND HOW IS OUR PATIENT, THE YOUNG MISS, THIS LOVELY DAY?
BUT MUCH BETTER, I'M SURE.
I LOOKED INTO HER ROOM BEFORE, BUT SHE WAS STILL ASLEEP.
GOOD, GOOD! I THOUGHT I HAD DIAGNOSED THE CASE CORRECTLY!
MY TREATMENT IS WORKING, THEN.
YOU MUST NOT TAKE ALL THE CREDIT, DOCTOR. LUCY'S STATE THIS MORNING IS DUE IN PART TO ME.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, MA'AM?
I WAS ANXIOUS ABOUT THE DEAR CHILD IN THE NIGHT, SO I LOOKED IN ON HER.
THE ROOM WAS SO VERY STUFFY...
THERE WERE A LOT OF THOSE HORRIBLE, STRONG-SMELLING FLOWERS ABOUT, EVEN AROUND HER NECK...
I FEARED THE HEAVY ODOR WOULD BE TOO MUCH FOR HER IN HER WEAK STATE, SO I TOOK THEM ALL AWAY..
...AND OPENED THE WINDOW A BIT, TO LET IN A LITTLE FRESH AIR.
YOU WILL BE QUITE PLEASED WITH HER CONDITION, I'M SURE.
even as she turned away, I saw the professor's face turn ASHEN GRAY...

...and he bolted for the STAIRS!
PROFESSOR --WHAT--?
COME! WE MUST SEE--AND ACT!
DEVILS OR NO DEVILS, OR ALL THE DEVILS AT ONCE-- WE FIGHT HIM ALL THE SAME!
BUT, THIS TIME--OH, THIS TIME--!
Then, as the door swung slowly open--
IT IS AS I EXPECTED--
HE HAS BEEN HERE AGAIN!
OH MY GOD!!
NEXT: HOUR OF THE WOLF!
FIN


MONSTER
GALLERY
Art: HERMOSO D. PANCHO

Art: PETE LIJAUCO

Art: GRAY MORROW

NEXT ISSUE

MORBIUS, THE LIVING VAMPIRE in
"THE MADMAN OF MANSION SLADE"
by DOUG MOENCH and SONNY TRINIDAD

SATANA, THE DEVIL'S DAUGHTER
"NIGHT OF THE DEMON—NIGHT OF THE DAMNED"
by CHRIS CLAREMONT and GEORGE EVANS

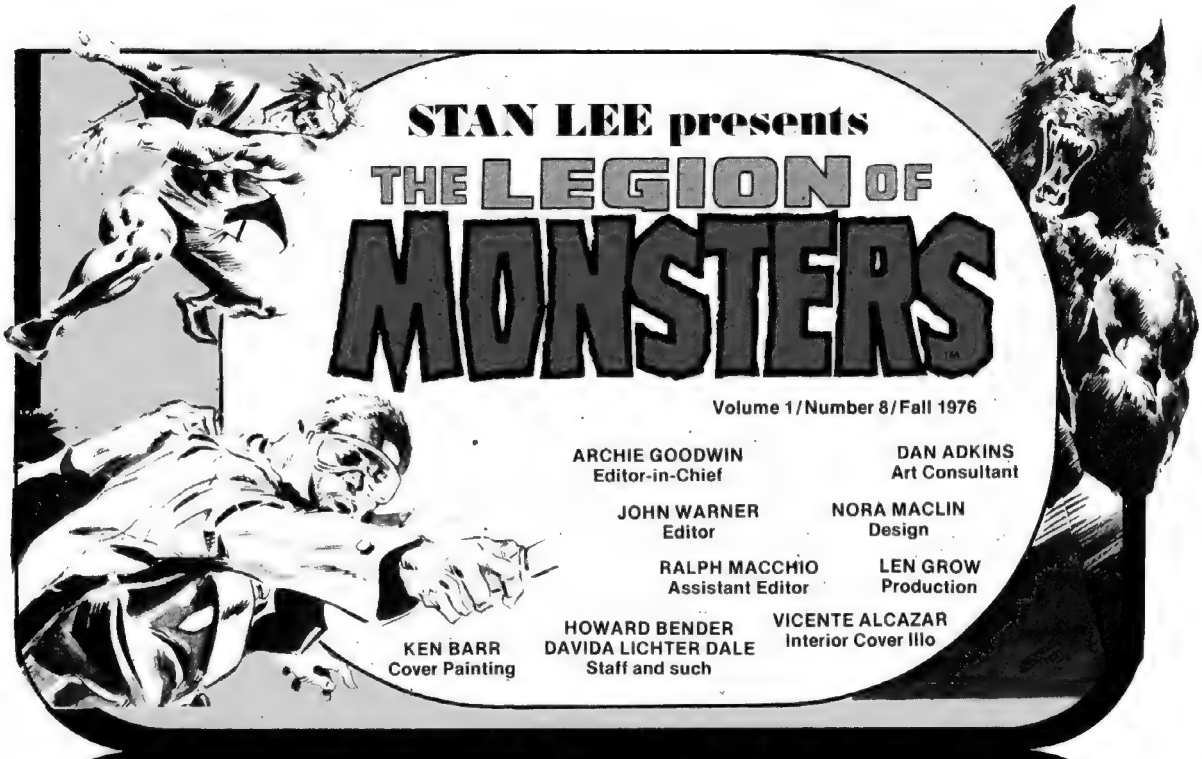
BRAM STOKER'S **DRACULA** in
"HOUR OF THE WOLVES"
by ROY THOMAS and DICK GIORDANO

Plus: an eerie assortment of spine-chilling special features—just waiting for you in the next necromantic issue of

THE LEGION OF MONSTERS

MARVEL PREVIEW
PRESENTS
THE LEGION OF
MONSTERS
starring
MORBIUS
the
Living
Vampire!
ALL
NEW!
PLUS:
BLADE
THE
VAMPIRE
SLAYER!
TERROR TALES in the MARVEL MANNER!
MARVEL
PREVIEW
$1 No 8

CLEMENTE
ALCAZAR
75



STAN LEE presents THE LEGION OF MONSTERS

Volume 1/Number 8/Fall 1976

ARCHIE GOODWIN
Editor-in-Chief

DAN ADKINS
Art Consultant

JOHN WARNER
Editor

NORA MACLIN
Design

RALPH MACCHIO
Assistant Editor

LEN GROW
Production

HOWARD BENDER
DAVIDA LICHTER DALE
Staff and such

VICENTE ALCAZAR
Interior Cover Illo

KEN BARR
Cover Painting

Table of Contents

THE MAN-GOD CONSPIRACY
Editor John Warner serves up a solemn apology while leaving the barest hint of things to come!

THE MADMAN OF MANSION SLADE!
Morbius the Living Vampire searches the fog-shrouded moor near the shunned Slade mansion, tracking a brutal murderer and discovers he isn't the only monster to prowl the eerie landscape! By Doug Moench and Sonny Trinidad!

MONSTERS UNLEASHED—AGAIN!
A comprehensive overview and critical appraisal of the monsters who refuse to die: the Marvel black-and-white horror magazines! By Ralph Macchio!

INTO THE HOUSE OF TERROR!
Blade, the Vampire Slayer, uncovers a festering horror in an isolated house against which even he seems powerless! By Marv Wolfman and Gene Colan!

THE REALITY MANIPULATORS!
A strange force lurks in the steaming heart of a forbidden swamp! And beyond the mystery lay a fatal terror of the mind! By Don McGregor and Mike Ploog!

THE CURSE OF ANUBIS!
A timeless evil from the tomb of the pharaoh stalks the modern world on a mission of blood-curdling vengeance! By Russ Jones, John Warner and Val Mayerik!

PREVIEW REVIEW
Your starstruck statements on everybody's favorite Devil's Daughter—Satana!

THE MAN-GOD CONSPIRACY!

A Marvel Apologia

What you hold in your hands, friends, is an excellent collection of graphic fantasy from, what I feel are some of the finest story-tellers in the comics field. People like Mike Ploog, Don McGregor, Val Mayerik, Doug Moench, Gene Colan, Sonny Trinidad and Marv Wolfman.

But you know something, friends — it's not enough!

This editorial is the most difficult piece of writing I've ever had to undertake.

But even that's not enough; not by a long shot.

For over a year now we have been promising you an issue of MARVEL PREVIEW devoted to a character called MAN-GOD (ex-TITAN). For over a year now MAN-GOD has failed to appear. The reasons are many and myriad and I could fill this editorial page with excuses, all quite true and valid. I could. But I won't. I won't because that's not the point. The point is that we have promised something and we have failed to deliver. That hurts because we, whose names appear on the books (one assumes because we take pride in what we are producing ... and we do), value you, the reader, as far more than just another fraction of a sales percentage point. And that's no hype, people, not even a smidgen of it. We knock ourselves out attempting to please and entertain you and to give you the very best quality possible for the all-too-hard earned dollars you spend on these magazines.

And that very item brings us to the *real* point of this editorial. The crime here is not that MAN-GOD, once more, doesn't appear, but that there were no *other* MARVEL PREVIEW projects well enough in the works to appear in its place, thus at least retaining the validity of the purpose of this book. When I stepped into the Editor's chair, due to a number of problems that no one had foreseen and, so, let get out of hand, MAN-GOD was the *only* PREVIEW project in the works. I immediately initiated some new ones — but the damage had been done. We could not initiate a well-thought-out idea for this book fast enough to cover for MAN-GOD — so when MAN-GOD was lost by the ever-efficient U.S. Postal service, we were up that proverbial creek.

You deserve better than that. A lot better. We OWE you better than that!

When I said last issue that I think Marvel should have one good horror book, I had no intention of MARVEL PREVIEW becoming it. And it won't. This is it. MAN-GOD has been retrieved and is well under way, as is our THOR project. Either MAN-GOD or THOR will be here next issue — no surprises, no substitutions. Because, in all honesty, if I can't produce the kind of magazine you deserve, maybe I shouldn't be here.

That may seem just a bit grim for an editorial, but it is how I feel, and I think right now you need the kind of commitment you can believe in. MARVEL PREVIEW still needs your continued support. I still feel that it is possibly the most valuable Black-and-White we produce — a vehicle for fresh ideas and new directions. And that, and that *only*, is what it should be used for and what it *will* be used for from now on.

On a somewhat lighter note, I am not at all displeased at this issue's contents, much as this wasn't really the best place to present them. It is a good, consistent horror package produced, as I said, by some of the top talents in the industry. I think you're getting a good load of entertainment for your dollar. And, who knows — if SATANA and now this does well enough, we just might be bringing out a new horror title. If we do, I can almost promise you it will star Satana.

Until then, take care and watch out for each other. And remember, next issue — MAN-GOD or THOR! One or the other. Really!

Join us ... please!

— JOHN WARNER, EDITOR

VICTORIA RAILWAY STATION, LONDON...
...ONE-WAY TO GLASGOW...
AND YOUR NAME, SIR...?
NIKOS MICHAELS!
NIKOS... MICHAELS...
YES... THERE WE ARE...
THAT'LL BE TRACK FOURTEEN, SIR, LEAVIN' IN LESS THAN SIX MINUTES!
HAVE A PLEASANT JOURNEY NOW!
WELL, HE WAS CERTAINLY AN ODD TYPE, JOHNNY...
WHY'S THAT?
ACH--DIDN'T YA SEE THE WAY HIS COLLAR WAS TURNED UP, AND HIS BRIM PULLED DOWN--ALL MYSTERIOUS-LIKE?
Y'BEEN READIN' TOO MUCH, PARKINS!
LIKELY AS NOT, THE POOR BLOKE'S SIMPLY TOO UGLY TO SHOW HIS FACE!

Story: Doug Moench Art: Sonny Trinidad

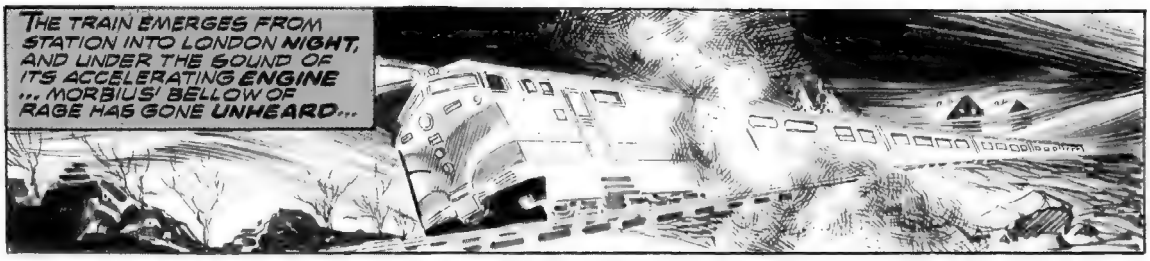
COMPARTMENT 12-C, LEFT COACH, SIR!

THE COACH IS EMPTY... AND THUS A MAN IDENTIFIED ONLY AS NIKOS MICHAELS HURRIES TOWARD HIS COMPARTMENT...

INDEED, THE TWO FACTORS SEEM INEXTRICABLY LINKED--AS THOUGH THE MAN'S ABRUPT HASTE FEEDS ON HIS NEW ISOLATION AND FREEDOM FROM PRYING EYES...

...AS THOUGH IT HAS REQUIRED EVERY LAST SHRED OF HIS FADING STRENGTH TO CONTROL HIMSELF-- TO RESTRAIN HIMSELF FROM SCREAMING TO THE WORLD THAT HE IS NOT NIKOS MICHAELS... THAT HE IS NO LONGER EVEN A MAN... THAT HE IS NOW--
THE PAIN-- BURNING IN ME...!
LIKE A FEVER-- DRIVING ME MAD--!!
THE MADMAN OF MANSION SLADE

MUST HAVE IT-- BEFORE THE FEVER DRIVES ME BERSERK--!
MUST DROWN THE PAIN...
LAST CALL FOR GLASGOW--!
ALL ABOARD, PLEASE--!
...AND HIS MOUTH-- HIS DEATH-WHITE LIPS-- SUCK AT THE BOTTLE OF PLASMA WITH THE OBSCENE SOUND OF LUST.
THEN, AS THE TRAIN LURCHES TO LIFE...
...MORBIUS DRINKS...
HIS HIDEOUS EYES GLARE WITH WILD GREED...
BUT SOON THE GURGLING SNARLS GROW SOFTER...
...WITH BLOOD...
...SWEET... THICK... BLOOD...
...AND WHEN IT IS OVER...
NO--!!
KREEESH


THE TRAIN EMERGES FROM STATION INTO LONDON NIGHT, AND UNDER THE SOUND OF ITS ACCELERATING ENGINE ... MORBIUS' BELLOW OF RAGE HAS GONE UNHEARD...

UNMOVED BY SOFT ANGUISH OR DEEP DARKNESS, THE TRAIN RATTLES ONWARD... NOW LEAVING LONDON BEHIND AS IT RELENTLESSLY STRAINS CLOSER TO ITS FINAL DESTINATION...

A THICK, RESTLESS FOG COVERS FENWICK MOOR THIS NIGHT. IT SEEMS TO TRAP THE MOONLIGHT WITHIN ITS INTANGIBLE GRASP TRANSFORMING IT TO A LAMBENT GLOW OF SWIRLING MYSTERY.

WE DID'NA WANT TO STAY OUT ON THE MOORS THIS LONG, DID WE, BOY...?
RRRR
NOW WHAT THE DEVIL ARE YE GROWLIN' ABOOT? THERE CANNA BE--
RRRRRR
ANGUS--! COME BACK HERE, YE GREAT STUPID BEAST--!
I'M TELLIN' YE THERE'S NOTHIN'--
AYIEEE
ANGUS... MY GOD, ANGUS... WHAT COULD 'AVE DONE THIS TO--
ANGUS--!
ANGUS-- WHAT IS IT, BOY--?!!
NO--OH MY GOD-- NOOOO!!

WHAT WAS--
GOOD... LORD... IN... HEAVEN...
UHRRRR
RARRRR
NOOOOOO!!
ROWRRR
YAAAAHHHH!!
RUHRRRR
UHRRR
BOTH INNOCENTS LIE DEAD...
...VICTIMS OF THE FOG, OF THE MOOR, AND OF SOMETHING ELSE...

DAWN: THOUGH AN HOUR SHORT OF GLASGOW, THE TRAIN NOW APPROACHES THE SMALL SCOTTISH TOWN OF CUPAR FIFE...
THE POPULATION OF CUPAR IS 2658...FAR TOO NEGLIGIBLE TO WARRANT EITHER TRAIN STATIONS OR SCHEDULED STOPS...
HOWEVER, THERE IS ONE PASSENGER ABOARD THIS PARTICULAR TRAIN...
WHAT
...WHO HAS BUSINESS IN CUPAR FIFE.
FROM A DEEP CROUCH, MORBIUS SURGES FROM THE ROOF OF THE TRAIN, SNAPPING HIS ARTIFICIAL WINGS TAUT TO SCOOP THE MORNING WIND...

FOR A MOMENT, THE LIVING VAMPIRE IS CAUGHT IN THE HURTLING TRAIN'S VORTEX...
...JERKED BACK LIKE A BIZARRE KITE WITHOUT STRING...
...BUT ONCE FREE OF THE TRAIN'S AFTERMATH, HE STRAIGHTENS HIS HOLLOW-BONED FORM...
...AND GUIDES IT LIKE AN ARROW...
...STRAIGHT TO THE GROUND.
SUNLIGHT ...BURNING ME...
IT WOULD SEEM THAT DURING THE DAY...
MY DISGUISE SERVES MORE THAN ONE PURPOSE!
A FIFTEEN-MINUTE WALK AWAITS MICHAEL MORBIUS ...A WALK THROUGH MILD PAIN DESPITE HIS SUN-SHIELDING HAT...
...BUT A WALK NECESSARY TO ATTAIN HIS GOAL...
CUPAR FIFE, SCOTLAND; EARLY MORNING...
CAB--!

WHERE YE BE GOIN', MATE?
DO YOU KNOW WHERE SLADE MANSION IS LOCATED?
BE A POOR CABBIE IF I DID'NA--AND BLIND TO BOOT! IN A TOWN LIKE CUPAR, A SINGLE MANSION IS JUST A WEE BIT HARD TO MISS!
CLIMB ABOARD, MATE!
Y'KNOW, IT'S FUNNY YOU'D BE WANTIN' TO GO UP TO THE SLADE HOUSE THIS MORNIN'...
FOLKS IN THE RESTAURANT WERE JUST TALKIN' ABOOT THE SLADES! Y'SEE, SANDY AITCHISON AN' HIS OLD HOUND HAVE'NA COME BACK FROM HUNTIN' ALL NIGHT...
HOW DOES THAT CONCERN THE SLADES?
WELL, THE DAMN FOOL WAS HUNTIN' OUT ON FENWICK MOOR--BETWEEN TOWN AND THE SLADE HOUSE! FOLKS ARE FIGURIN' THAT SANDY AND HIS HOUND WERE MURDERED!
MURDERED...?
AYE! FIVE OR SIX YEARS AGO, THERE WAS QUITE A FEW MURDERS IN CUPAR--UNTIL FOLKS LEARNED NOT TO GO OUT ON THE MOORS AFTER DARK! SINCE THEN, IT'S MOSTLY BEEN SHEEP SLAUGHTERED--THROATS TORN OUT AND THE LIKE...
ANYWAY, SINCE THE WHOLE THING STARTED 'ROUND ABOOT THE TIME OLD ABIGAIL SLADE DIED... SOME FOLKS BELIEVE IT'S JEREMIAH WHO'S THE MANIAC--BROKE UP OVER LOSIN' HIS MOTHER, Y'SEE...
BY THE BY, WOULD IT BE JEREMIAH SLADE YE'RE GOIN' TO SEE NOW...?
MY BUSINESS IS WITH RONSON SLADE!
OH, IT'S THE LAD'S FATHER, THEN! MUST'VE BEEN DIFFICULT FOR HIM, TOO... SHE WAS HIS WIFE, Y'KNOW! ABIGAIL, I MEAN...

BUT THEN AGAIN, THERE'RE OTHER FOLKS WHO DON'T BELIEVE IT'S THE SLADES AT ALL... CLAIM THE MOOR'S HAUNTED...
... BY SOME GREAT MONSTER WITH BLAZIN' RED EYES AND THE LIKE...
AND WHICH DO YOU BELIEVE?
I BELIEVE IN STAYIN' OFF THE MOORS UNLESS THE SUN'S WITH ME!
YE'D DO WELL TO ADOPT THE SAME RELIGION YERSELF!
BUT HERE'S YER STOP, MATE...
"...SLADE MANSION."
YES? WHO ARE YOU?
WHAT DO YOU WANT--?
IT'S MORBIUS, RONSON!
I WANT TO KNOW WHY YOU'VE NEVER ANSWERED MY LETTERS!
MICHAEL--! GOOD LORD, MAN --YOUR FACE--!
--WAS FULLY DESCRIBED IN MY LETTERS, RONSON ...TO PREPARE YOU FOR THIS VISIT, WHOSE INVITATION WAS NEVER EXTENDED!
YOU MENTIONED A PALLOR, BUT... I NEVER IMAGINED--!
BUT PLEASE, MICHAEL--I'M TRULLY SORRY I NEVER REPLIED TO YOUR REQUESTS! I'VE BEEN... EXTREMELY BUSY --NOT WITH MY WORK, BUT...

WELL, IT'S MY SON JEREMIAH, MICHAEL! HE'S...NOT WELL...
EXCUSE ME, RONSON --BUT COULD WE CONTINUE INSIDE? THE AFFLICTION RESPONSIBLE FOR MY SKIN'S PALLOR...HAS ALSO RENDERED IT EXTREMELY SENSITIVE TO SUNLIGHT...
OF COURSE, MICHAEL--FORGIVE ME!
WE CAN TALK IN MY STUDY! IT'S DOWN THE CORRIDOR TO YOUR LEFT--I'LL JOIN YOU THERE IN A MOMENT...
SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING, MICHAEL...
I HAD TO ATTEND A MINOR TASK ...BUT EVEN THOSE SEEM TO REQUIRE GREATER TIME THESE DAYS! AGE, I'M AFRAID, IS NOT DESIGNED FOR QUICKNESS...
BUT WHERE WERE WE?
YOU MENTIONED YOUR SON WAS ILL...
YES! WELL...
JEREMIAH IS NOT ILL, MICHAEL! HE'S ACTUALLY MAD! HOPELESSLY--VIOLENTLY--INSANE! IN FACT, HE MUST BE CONFINED TO A SINGLE ROOM...
WHY NOT A SANITARIUM?
NO...
WERE WE TO COMMIT HIM TO AN ASYLUM, HE WOULD SPEND THE REST OF HIS LIFE IN A PADDED CELL! YOU'VE NO IDEA HOW HE RAVES, MICHAEL --THE DELUSIONS HE HAS... THE WILD STORIES HE TELLS...
BUT LET'S NOT DWELL UPON IT! IF JEREMIAH CANNOT BE HELPED, THEN PERHAPS YOU CAN.
NOW THAT YOU'RE HERE --AND DESPITE WHAT MUST HAVE APPEARED AS A MOST CALLOUS DISREGARD FOR AN OLD FRIEND ON MY PART...

... I WILL OF COURSE AID YOU IN YOUR ATTEMPT TO FIND A CURE FOR THIS BLOOD DISEASE OF--
SOME TEA...?
GET HER OUT, RONSON--!
IT'S QUITE ALL RIGHT, MICHAEL! I'VE ALREADY INFORMED MARY OF YOUR... AFFLICTION!
YOU...TOLD HER--?
ONLY ABOUT YOUR APPEARANCE, MICHAEL!
I'M AFRAID MY DAUGHTER IS NOT AS INTERESTED IN DETAILS AS WE SCIENTISTS ARE! BUT THERE'S NO NEED TO BE SELF-CONSCIOUS IN HER PRESENCE!
I SEE! THEN... WHEN MAY WE BEGIN WORK, RONSON...?
NOT RIGHT NOW, I'M AFRAID! I WAS IN THE MIDDLE OF SOME EXPERIMENTS WHEN YOU ARRIVED, MICHAEL! THEY'LL SPOIL IF LEFT TOO LONG...
IN FACT, I REGRET I WON'T EVEN HAVE TIME FOR YOUR TEA, MARY!
BEFORE YOU GO, RONSON... THE CAB DRIVER MENTIONED SOMETHING ABOUT A MONSTER--OR A MANIAC--COMMITTING MURDERS OUT ON THE MOOR...
OH...UH, YES... THERE WERE SOME MURDERS SEVERAL YEARS BACK! BUT IT'S NOT MY SON WHO COMMITTED THEM, IF THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE WONDERING...
PROBABLY A WOLF--OR A RABID HOUND... AND LONG SINCE DEAD BY NOW!
IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, THEN, I MUST GET BACK TO MY LAB!
MARY WILL SHOW YOU TO THE GUEST ROOM!
THANK YOU!
YOU'RE QUITE WELCOME, MR. MORBIUS! AND WHILE I DON'T LIKE TO APOLOGIZE FOR MY FATHER, I'M SURE YOU REALIZE HE'S GOTTEN OLDER SINCE YOU WERE COLLEAGUES... AND HE HAS CHANGED SINCE MOTHER DIED!

I UNDERSTAND, MARY!
THEN THERE'S ONLY ONE LAST THING, MR. MORBIUS! FATHER PROBABLY EXPLAINED TO YOU ABOUT MY BROTHER! SHOULD YOU HEAR HIM SHOUTING... OR EVEN SCREAMING...
... IT REALLY IS BEST TO IGNORE IT!
MORBIUS FINDS NO POSSIBLE REPLY TO THE GIRL'S SOMBER WORDS...
...AND SO HE SITS IN SILENCE, ALONE FOR LONG MINUTES FILLED WITH THOUGHTS OF A CURE--AN END TO HIS GHASTLY VAMPIRIC EXISTENCE...
...BUT LONG MINUTES BEREFT, AS USUAL, OF HOPE.
AND THEN--
FALL
MEEE
CREEE
DEMENTIA--A VOICE OF WAILING DEMENTIA...
...AND YET A VOICE OF ALL TOO FAMILIAR AGONY AND TORMENT...
LET MEE OUT PLEEEASE
...A VOICE WHICH INVOKES DESPERATE PITY... AND FROM A LIVING VAMPIRE, A FORM OF FERVENT EMPATHY...
NO ANIMAL
...A VOICE, IN SHORT, WHICH RENDERS MORBIUS DEAF TO ALL PREVIOUS CAUTIONS AND RATIONALIZATIONS...
OH MY GOD... YOU ARE KEPT LIKE AN ANIMAL...
WHO ARE YOU--? THE LIGHT WON'T LET ME SEE YOU--!
BUT YOUR'S IS NOT MY FATHER'S VOICE--!

LISTEN TO ME, VOICE--YOU MUST LISTEN TO ME--!
YOU MUST FREE ME--SO I CAN TELL THE POLICE--!! IT'S NOT ME WHO KILLED THEM! FATHER WANTS EVERYONE TO BELIEVE THAT--!
FATHER'S THE MONSTER OF THE MOORS--HE'S THE ONE!! WHEN MOTHER DIED, HE GOT AFRAID OF DEATH --TRIED TO STOP DEATH --BUT HE TURNED INTO A MONSTER INSTEAD!!
I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO KNOWS IT!! DON'T YOU SEE, VOICE--?!? HE CAN'T FREE ME--HE'S LIKE JEKYLL AND HYDE--FATHER AND MONSTER --AND I'LL TELL!!
YOU MUST FREE ME TO STOP HIM!- SO I CAN PROVE I'M NOT THE MONSTER OF THE MOORS--!! YOU MUST, YOU MUST, YOU MUST!!
FREE ME!
THE MAN IS MAD...
FREE MEEEE
...PERHAPS MAD ENOUGH TO KILL...
...MAD ENOUGH TO BE SHACKLED LIKE A BEAST...
I'M NO ANIMAL!
LET ME OUT
...MAD ENOUGH TO REQUIRE THE PROTECTION...
...OF A DESPERATE, DISTRAUGHT FATHER WHO CANNOT BEAR THE THOUGHT OF BEING PUNISHED FOR THE LOSS OF HIS WIFE...WITH THE LOSS OF HIS SON AS WELL.
DRUGS, RONSON--?
WHO--?!
MICHAEL--! YOU ...YOU STARTLED ME, MICHAEL...!
I ASKED YOU A QUESTION! WERE YOU INJECTING YOURSELF WITH A DRUG, RONSON?

UH... YES, MORBIUS... IT WAS A DRUG! BUT NOT THE KIND YOU THINK...
YOU SEE, MY HEART IS THE ONLY ADDICT AROUND HERE! IT, UH, REFUSES TO FUNCTION WITHOUT PERIODIC MEDICINAL PROMPTING!
OF COURSE! FORGIVE ME, RONSON!
I CAME DOWN TO ASK WHEN YOU'D BE FINISHED WITH YOUR EXPERIMENTS...
NOT FOR ANOTHER SEVERAL HOURS, MICHAEL!
THEN TONIGHT MAY WE--
SLEEP, I'M AFRAID, IS YET ANOTHER MEDICINE REQUIRED BY MY HEART... A GOOD FOURTEEN HOURS OF IT EVERY NIGHT
BUT I PROMISE YOU--IN THE MORNING, WE'LL TAKE A SAMPLE OF YOUR BLOOD AND BEGIN SEARCHING FOR THE CURE!
VERY WELL! IN THE MORNING, THEN...
NIGHT: AND SLADE MANSION IS SWALLOWED BY LANGUID FOG...
...AS MORBIUS TOO FEELS HIMSELF CONSUMED.
THE THIRST ARRIVED WITH DARKNESS... THE PAIN SOMEWHAT LATER, WHEN THIRST WAS ALLOWED TO PERSIST. BOTH HAVE NOW PEAKED, AND CONSPIRED TOWARD INSENSATE LUST. BUT STILL, HE REFUSES TO ENTER THE NIGHT...
...KNOWING HIS RESOLVE WILL BREAK UNDER THE SLIGHTEST TEMPTATION...
MR. MORBIUS...?

I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT LIKE SOMETHING TO EAT BEFORE--
GET... OUT ...OF... HERE...
I... I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY--
GET-- OUT--, OF-- HERE!
BUT IF THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG ...MAYBE I CAN--
YOU FOOL--!!
GET OUT OF HERE!!
SHE IS HELPLESS ...WARM AND ALIVE... PULSING WITH THICK, HOT BLOOD... FRESH BLOOD...
N-NO... PLEASE ...DON'T... PLEASE...
SHRAH
EEEEEE
MORBIUS BREAKS-- AND THE VAMPIRE LIVES.
NOOOO
EEEEEE
EVEN AS HIS FANGS PUNCTURE THE RESILIENT FLESH OF THE GIRL'S THROAT, MORBIUS FIGHTS THE OBSESSION...

...FIGHTS IT EVEN AS HE SUCKS AT THE SPURTING STREAMS OF BLOOD...
...FIGHTS IT...
...FIGHTS IT...
... AND WINS!
NO--!!
DAMN IT, NOOO!!
NOOOO
PLEEEEASE
YOU... YOU'RE THE MURDERER ...THE ONE WHO ROAMS THE MOOR...
I'VE GOT TO TELL THEM--!
TELL THE POLICE--!
YOU KILLED ALL THOSE PEOPLE... RIPPED THE THROATS FROM DOGS AND SHEEP...
LEAVE... LEAVE WHILE YOU CAN... YOU LITTLE FOOL...
THE GIRL IS IN SHOCK; A CONDITION MORBIUS HAS FREQUENTLY WITNESSED... BUT SHE WILL LIVE, AT LEAST...

YES, SHE WILL LIVE.
THAT, AND THE SMALL AMOUNT OF INGESTED BLOOD, GIVES HIM STRENGTH HE GATHERS FOR LONG, HEAVY MOMENTS...
...UNTIL--
HELP-- SOMEBODY HELP ME-- THE MURDERER--!!
BUT WILL SHE LIVE?--NOW?... OUT ON THE MOOR? -- FACING A MONSTER... A MANIAC... WOLF OR RABID HOUND--?
IT IS A QUESTION THE LIVING VAMPIRE DOES NOT WANT ANSWERED... KNOWING THAT IT WAS HIS ATTACK WHICH HAS NOW POSED IT...
HELLLLPP!!
UHRRR

AAAIIEEE
RARRRRR
RRWWW
SWAKK!
THKK!

THE THRASHED FOG RETURNS TO TRANQUILITY...
...BUT THE FEVER IN MORBIUS CONTINUES TO RAGE. THE THIRST, NEVER FULLY QUELLED, RISES AGAIN LIKE NOT BILE TO THE BACK OF HIS THROAT...
HE DRINKS, LONG AND DEEP. THIS TIME, IT IS NOT A HELPLESS GIRL UNDER HIS HELLISH FANGS...
THIS TIME...
...HE DOES NOT FIGHT IT...
...AND DOES NOT RISE UNTIL GORGED.
THE MADNESS BEGINS TO FADE FROM HIS EYES AS HE LOOKS DOWN UPON THIS FELLED AND DRAINED MONSTER OF THE MOORS...
...AND SEES--
FATHER...?

RONSON--!
YES, MICHAEL... YOU SEE, THE INJECTIONS ...THEY FAILED TO SUPPRESS THE BEAST...
...AFTER DARK...
LORD, RONSON, I --I'VE TAKEN SO MUCH OF YOUR BLOOD--! YOU'RE DYING--I'VE MURDERED YOU--!
NO, MICHAEL... YOU HAVE NOT MURDERED A MAN... YOU'VE MERELY DESTROYED A MONSTER...
...FOR, THE FIRST TIME... I TRIED TO ...CONQUER DEATH BY RESTORING... MY YOUTH...
...I LOST... WHATEVER HUMANITY...
...I ONCE... POSSESSSSSS...*
THEN, ONCE AGAIN, THE CURE IS GONE... IF EVER IT EXISTED...
...GONE WITH THE BLOOD OF A FORMER FRIEND NOW FILLING HIS BLOATED STOMACH.
COULD HE BUT AFFORD IT... HE WOULD BECOME SICK.
VIOLENTLY SICK.
GO HOME, GIRL!
GO HOME AND FREE YOUR BROTHER FROM MADNESS!

MONSTERS

From whence sprang the origins of the Marvel Monster Craze?

It's a puzzling question indeed, one which seems to have no pat answer though everyone has offered a multitude of maybes. When kung fu became all the rage across America, the source was easily traced to the movies of the late Bruce Lee and the now-defunct television series which starred David Carradine. Thus when Marvel came out with its own MASTER OF KUNG FU, IRON FIST, and black-and-white DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU, we were tapping an already existing phenomenon for audience potential. In 1970, when then-publisher Martin Goodman had decided to enter the horror magazine arena with a title featuring *Count Dracula*, chances for its success looked reasonable because Warren Publications had been doing quite well with a small group of horror magazines of their own for several years. And despite the failures of two previous black-and-white attempts by Marvel to gain a foothold in this market, (an oversized Spider-Man book and a raw adventure book, SAVAGE TALES—neither of which was horror oriented) perhaps it was the subject matter which just wasn't selling and not the basic format. Unfortunately, for obscure reasons, Dracula first appeared in his own color comic and only later was awarded a black-and-white, when the color strip proved successful. For you hardnosed factfinders, the first issue of the color TOMB OF DRACULA had an April 1971 cover date and a quarterly publication schedule. With the second issue, the book went bi-monthly and by the eighth issue it became a monthly title where it has remained in terms of frequency up through the present.

But here's the rub.

As stated, Marvel had originally intended Dracula to begin his career at the House of Ideas by stalking the cobwebbed pages of a black-and-white magazine *minus* the Comics Code restrictions on violence and bloodletting;

UNLEASHED---AGAIN

By Ralph Macchio

two of the prime selling points of any vampire worth his fangs. Obviously, with the Code keeping its eye on things there, would have to be a conspicuous absence of gore and shredded throats. How could a character whose very name was synonymous with blood, survive and prosper in a bloodless medium? The answer lay in the focusing of the reader's attention on mood, on a tangible texture of evil which made its ominous presence felt in a more than visual way. And it worked. Under the capable scripting of Gerry Conway, Gardner Fox, Archie Goodwin, and of course, Marv Wolfman, combined with the extraordinary pencilling and inking of Gene Colan and Tom Palmer, T.O.D. had assured itself a place in the forefront of the Monster March. The Craze was about to begin.

With the success of TOMB OF DRACULA fresh in their minds, Stan Lee and Roy Thomas returned to their original plans for the revitalized Count in early 1973 with the first of their new black-and-white horror line: DRACULA LIVES! And an auspicious debut it was. For whatever the reason, the accent in this new non-Code regulated title was on storytelling and characterization, not gratuitous blood-spattering. Dracula became an awesome figure of Undead power, about whom an entire mythology of supporting characters and adversaries moved under his menacing shadow.

DRACULA LIVES went through numerous changes in its thirteen issue existence as the new Marvel black-and-white department passed from its nascent stages into youthful exuberance. In addition to graphic stories circulating around the Prince of Vampires, there were articles covering every conceivable aspect of Dracula, from his numerous screen appearances to the historical authenticity of a man named Vlad Tepes. And along with the articles went several prose fiction pieces chronicling yet more events in the 500 year "life" of Dracula. One particularly welcome editorial decision was the removal of the 1950's horror reprints after issue #4, reprints which at the outset were apparently necessary to keep the cost of such an expensive publication down. With the phasing out of the 50's tales, room was opened which allowed for at least three complete Dracula stories per issue, covering all the various time periods during which the Transylvanian Terror was abroad. Continuity, ever the Marvel hallmark, was scrupulously maintained by Marv Wolfman, who was careful to oversee each story and make certain the Dracula legend Marvel was building would be a consistent one. And it didn't stop with Dracula, for his own estranged daughter, Lilith, received her short-lived series in issue #10. Perhaps the most ambitious project attempted was the brilliant, though sorrowfully uncompleted adaptation by Roy Thomas and Dick Giordano of the book which started it all: Bram Stoker's DRACULA.

When DRACULA LIVES reached its thirteenth issue, it had become one very classy magazine. With the DRACULA adaptation and Lilith stories alternating with full-length Dracula tales, this title had a flexible, satisfying format, which elicited largely favorable mail and an adequate sales record.

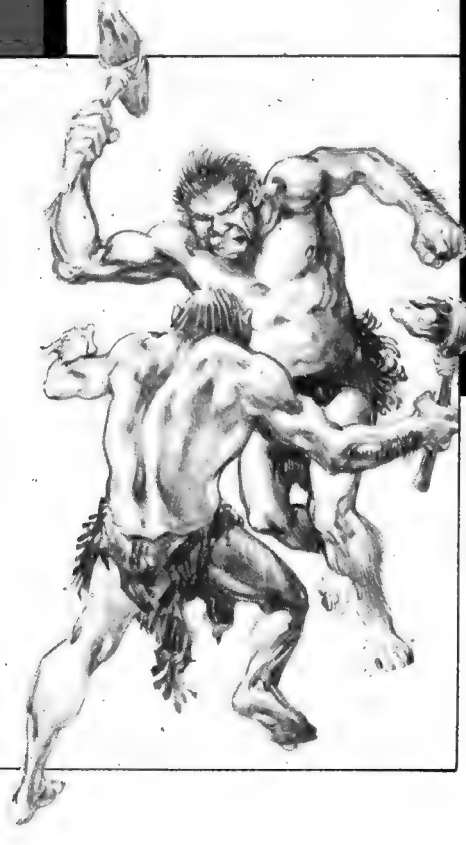
And then it was cancelled.

We'll return to that last statement a bit later, but now let's roll backward a few paragraphs to the point at which Dracula made his premiere appearance

in his own black-and-white. Apparently the enthusiasm of the undertaking was infectuous, precipitating Marvel's taking a giant leap forward in this new market by unveiling no less than three more full-size magazines all revolving around variations of the horror theme. Within months of one another, MONSTERS UNLEASHED and TALES OF THE ZOMBIE, had staked out places for themselves on the newsstands to satiate the allegedly horror-hungry buying public. And with the legions of the Undead making fast inroads into Marvel's color books, why not try a magazine which wouldn't feature Dracula, but would deal with the entire universe of vampires and devote a title to that? Two points if you can remember the name. That's right—VAMPIRE TALES.

The question most likely raised in the mind of vampiric novices is what in blazes could anyone (even Marvel) do with such a limited framework. The answer was: plenty. It seems vampires and their ilk appear in the legends of all the peoples of the world, from South American tribes to Indian farmers. With such a universal background the avenues open for exploration seemed limitless; vampire stories could be laid anywhere, during any time period.

First issues of any magazines are the most difficult to give a truly objective assessment to; so many things have to gel in all areas that it's much too easy to



come down and be cynical with a biting commentary. There was considerable room for improvement in all facets of the book and it wasn't long in coming. The forefront of the book beginning with the second issue became, *Morbius the Living Vampire* (who had first appeared in SPIDER-MAN #101) the strip took on a forward direction with the coming of Don McGregor and Tom Sutton and later Doug Moench and Sonny Trinidad. And while Morbius became the lead in VAMPIRE TALES, his own color comic, ADVENTURES INTO FEAR was moving in a totally different direction. In the color strip, writer Steve Gerber had decided to take the character and place him in a science fiction setting on a different world. Morbius had made the difficult transition from adversary of a major Marvel hero into star of two separate series. Vampires were unquestionably having an easy time of it, despite the best efforts of stake wielding critics who never believed these night-stalkers had any long lasting potential.

VAMPIRE TALES also served as the showcase for both *Satana the Devil's Daughter* and *Lilith the daughter of Dracula*, though each was presented in

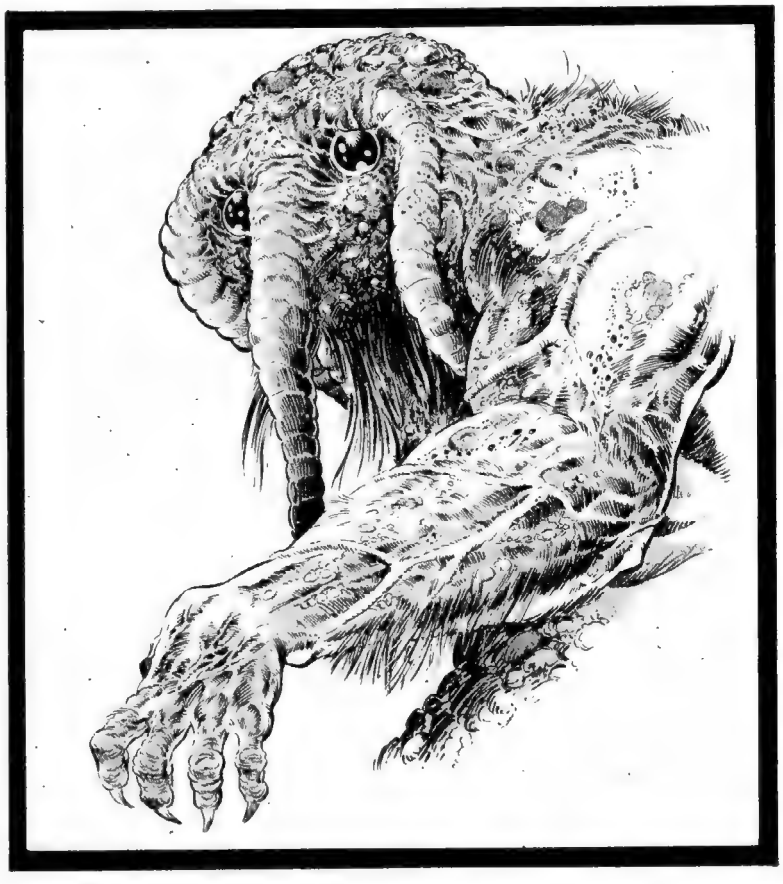
only one adventure here before going on to other magazines. With the success of Warren's *Vampirella*, Marvel felt it had nothing to lose by trying out several female horror characters of its own. Regrettably neither strip ever amounted to much during the brief period they existed, though the fault was more circumstantial than creative.

Eventually, text features were eliminated from VAMPIRE TALES in favor of longer, more involved Morbius stories, but this was to be temporary, for with the eleventh issue VAMPIRE TALES was cancelled.

The realm of the Undead has many permutations and variations on itself which allow for ample latitude in the selection of a theme around which a horror magazine can be published. One topic which had been given some exposure before but had never really had a magazine devoted to it was *voo doo*. And what better to make the main feature in such a book than the adventures of one of the most horrifying specters from beyond the grave: a zuvembi. And so TALES OF THE ZOMBIE was born and became one of the four flagship productions of the newly opened Marvel Monster Shop. Although he was a "new" character in the Monster Universe, the origins of Marvel's zombie date back to a graphic story by *Sub-Mariner* creator Bill Everett. When Stan Lee had decided he wanted to do a magazine entitled TALE OF THE ZOMBIE it was left in the capable editorial hands of one Roy Thomas to decide just who that zombie was going to be. When Roy uncovered the late 50's tale featuring the zombie by Bill Everett, he knew Marvel had its newest fear-feature set. ZOMBIE had a short run of ten issues, but it, as did all the other fledgling Marvel magazines, become ever more and more worth its cover price. The scripting was by Steve Gerber, whose own MAN-THING color series, another Monster Craze offshoot, became a classic in its own time. Suffice to say Steve did more with Marvel's zombie than had ever been done with a character of its kind before, in any medium.

Marvel's zombie was on, of all things, a spiritual odyssey to reclaim his lost humanity—a humanity he'd lost long before becoming a zombie. Simon Garth (star of our show) was a wealthy plantation owner in New Orleans who had allowed money and its pursuit to usurp his deepest feelings, his soul in effect. When he was murdered and returned to "life" as a zombie, he was set apart from other walking dead figures in that he retained a horrifying awareness of his condition. He evolved as a true human being internally, while his skin was encrusted with decay. Eventually, after seeing much of himself through the actions of others, Simon Garth returned to the peace of the grave, a whole man. With a little imagination, even the most prosaic of concepts can become interesting storytelling devices.

There were other zombies who made their stiff-legged way through TALES OF THE ZOMBIE in various anthology stories and much of the realm of voo doo was explored through a goodly number of text pieces, many of them quite comprehensive. It was a fine package but the kind of magazine one isn't sorry to see cancelled as the ZOMBIE was after issue #10, because we had followed its leading character from ignorance and adversity to self-knowledge and finally peace. May Simon Garth's eternal rest never be disturbed.



The fourth of Marvel's initial black-and-white horror books (and the second to be released) was a book which went under the unwieldy title of MONSTERS UNLEASHED. The editorial thrust behind this project was to spotlight "monsters in each and every incarnation.", though it's the opinion of some that the very amorphous nature of the concept worked against the magazine and kept it from being among the most successful of black-and-whites. An added handicap was the lack of an impressive lead feature. The first issue was all anthology tales, but beginning with the second, Marvel's version of the *Frankenstein Monster*, who, at the time, had his own color comic, was updated to 1973/74. But it lacked purpose and direction from the start, a problem which switching artist and writer in mid-story did little, if anything, to alleviate. The rest of the magazine was left open and along the way a few nice things were done. Yet, overall, there was much to be desired even after MONSTERS UNLEASHED was several issues old.

There were several attempts at beginning other series which never ran more than a few installments, such as the ill-fated *Gulliver Jones Warrior of Mars* strip. There were a number of prose pieces featuring the *Man-Thing* character (written by Steve Gerber) and one of Marvel's color- book successes, *Werewolf by Night* (by Gerry Conway). It's interesting to note that in a highly touted visual medium, the prose stories brought forth some of the most favorable mail. Of course, there were also the obligatory articles for awhile, which ran less to factual pieces on monsters and more in the area of reviewing early Universal horror films.

Eventually the reprints had been eliminated, as they had in the other Marvel Monster books and things had gotten a bit more organized. Still, when MONSTERS UNLEASHED died with

its eleventh issue, it was perhaps further than any other Marvel black-and-white from having finally found its direction.

Two other horror titles are worth mentioning for they kind of round out this little foray into retrospective criticism. Neither of these books was a groundbreaker as the previous four were, still they were part and parcel of the Marvel Monster Movement, so let's see where they were at.

THE HAUNT OF HORROR was to have been the black-and-white which dealt with the subtler kinds of terrors, those which infest the mind—or possess the body. With the second issue, a new character was introduced, one who had not had his baptism of fire in a color comic as had Morbius, Dracula, or the Frankenstein Monster. His name was *Gabriel the Devil Hunter*. The Exorcist had taken hold of the American public and so there was certainly room for a character of that persuasion in a horror magazine. Despite the occasional crudeness of the art, this was at times a rather powerful strip, which if read under the proper conditions could evoke deep emotions. Gabriel left the HAUNT OF HORROR book with its last issue, though he was to appear once again in the final issue of MONSTERS UNLEASHED. *Satana the Devil's Daughter*, for whom Marvel had been searching for a home, became the secondary feature in the book, appearing in several stories and an exceptional prose piece by new Satana scripter, Chris Claremont. Unfortunately, her appearances were intermittent and in her brief black-and-white life she had gone through no less than three writers. Most recently the Devil's Daughter appeared last issue in this very book, MARVEL PREVIEW and if all goes well, there may be more in the offing. HAUNT OF HORROR in addition to its two series stars, ran a long article on Marvel writers' reactions to The Exorcist which went over two issues. And then with the fifth issue, HAUNT OF HORROR was cancelled in an apparently last minute decision, for the back cover of that last issue had a next issue ad.

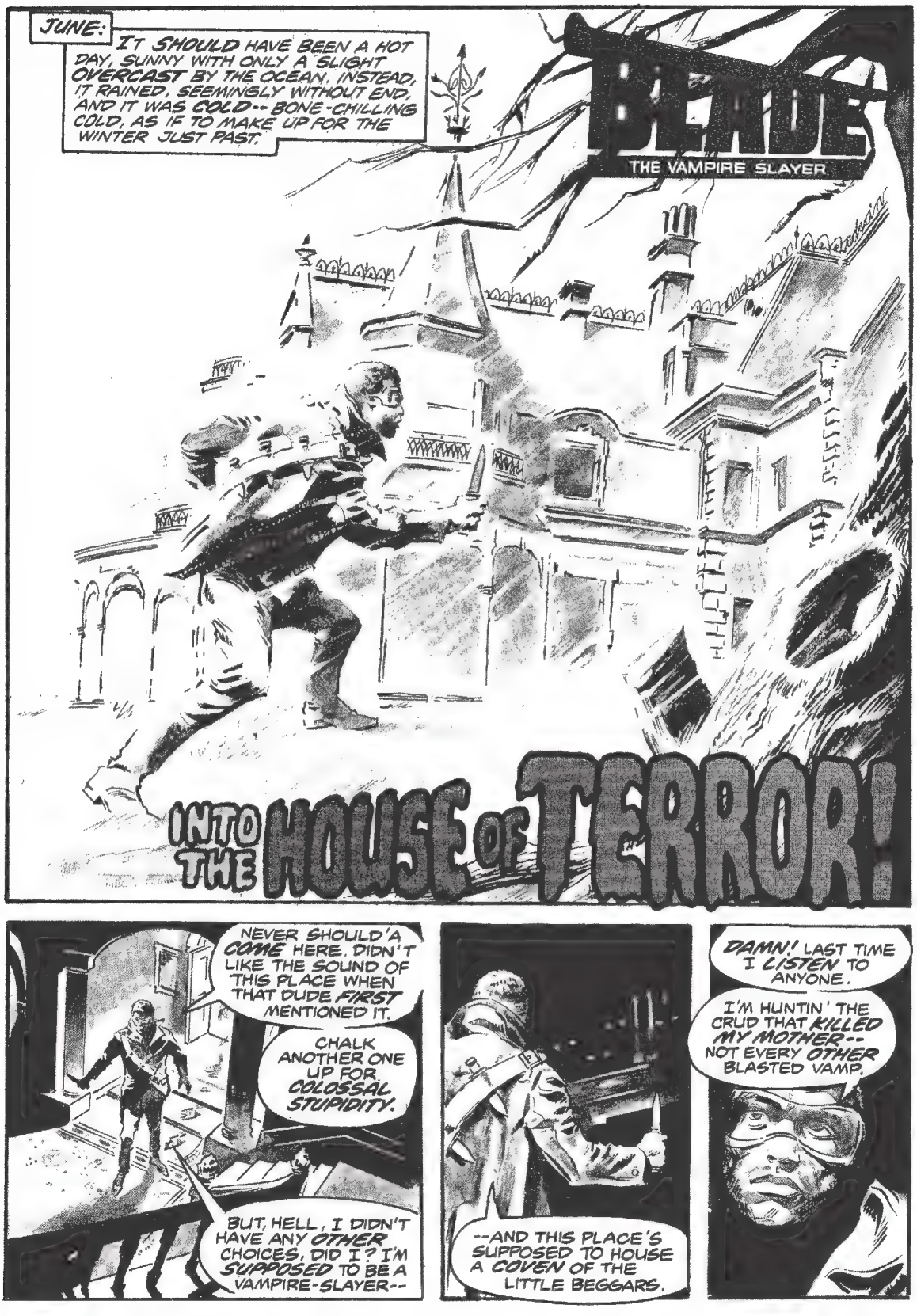
One final magazine which was part of the Great Craze was Marvel's MONSTERS OF THE MOVIES which was an all-article magazine handled largely on the West Coast by people outside of the Marvel mainstream. The first six issues were devoted to the screen appearances of most of the well known denizens of the night, such as the werewolf, vampire, and mummy. There were interviews with several film personalities and looks behind the screen at make-up and costuming. Still, the old Marvel magic was missing. And so with the seventh issue, editorial chores were evenly divided between the West and East Coast—where Marvel's main headquarters is. Issue seven featured a comprehensive filmbook on Hammer Films' classic Horror of Dracula and it seemed as if good things were in store. But apparently early issues were not sales blockbusters and thus with its ninth issue, billed as the "super annual issue" and its cover price boosted from one dollar up another quarter, MONSTERS OF THE MOVIES passed into oblivion.

We've just about covered Marvel's attempts to make a solid stand in the horror market. Oh there were a couple of footnotes that could be added, such as two issues of a magazine entitled MASTERS OF TERROR, and one issue of LEGION OF MONSTERS which attempted once again to test sales most recently in 1975. But for the most part, in the black-and-white medium, there isn't much happening in the way of loathsome demons from the pit or things that go bump in the night.

And it's a shame.

No one really knows what suddenly began to turn people who read comics on to monsters. And no one knows why, suddenly, an entire line of magazines, many of which were emerging as solid items of visual and verbal quality, were decimated at a single stroke. If the books had all been bad, their deaths would have been welcomed. But they weren't. In the short year or two they existed a sincere attempt was made to show that stories about monsters, even the most visually repugnant ones, don't of necessity have to be grade Z losers, but can achieve the same sensitivity and expertise of craftsmanship as any other literary or graphic endeavor.

As a final assessment one can only state that the Marvel monster line had considerable potential nipped in the gestating bud. But if things move in cycles, as they say, then we suggest you keep your crucifix over the bed, your wolfbane on the door, and your eyes on the newsstands. You never know when the Marvel Monsters will stalk the musty magazine racks again.


JUNE:
IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN A HOT DAY, SUNNY WITH ONLY A SLIGHT OVERCAST BY THE OCEAN. INSTEAD, IT RAINED, SEEMINGLY WITHOUT END, AND IT WAS COLD -- BONE-CHILLING COLD, AS IF TO MAKE UP FOR THE WINTER JUST PAST.
BLADE
THE VAMPIRE SLAYER
INTO THE HOUSE OF TERROR!

NEVER SHOULD'A COME HERE. DIDN'T LIKE THE SOUND OF THIS PLACE WHEN THAT DUDE FIRST MENTIONED IT.
CHALK ANOTHER ONE UP FOR COLOSSAL STUPIDITY.
BUT, HELL, I DIDN'T HAVE ANY OTHER CHOICES, DID I? I'M SUPPOSED TO BE A VAMPIRE-SLAYER--

--AND THIS PLACE'S SUPPOSED TO HOUSE A COVEN OF THE LITTLE BEGGARS.

DAMN! LAST TIME I LISTEN TO ANYONE.
I'M HUNTIN' THE CRUD THAT KILLED MY MOTHER -- NOT EVERY OTHER BLASTED VAMP.

HELL! WHO AM I FOOLIN'? I CAN'T LEAVE, NOT NOW.
NOT 'TIL I'VE CHECKED THIS STINKIN' JOINT TWICE.
HOLD IT! NOISES!
RRRP!
SO THE WEIRD CREEP WAS RIGHT AFTER ALL, LET'S HEAR IT FOR HONESTY.
REMIND ME TO SHAKE HIS SWEATY LITTLE HAND--
--PROVIDIN' I GET OUTTA HERE.
C'MON, YOU LOUSY BLOOD-SUCKERS! COME AND DIE!
LIKE A WELL-OILED MACHINE, BLADE WHIRLS--HIS WOODEN KNIFE SLASHING AT THE LIFELESS FLESH-FORMS WHICH ATTACK.
AND ALL THE WHILE, DARK SHADOWS COVER THEM WITH A THICK BLANKET OF NIGHT..
ONE FALLS, DEAD FOR A SECOND TIME. BUT OTHERS STILL ATTACK.
...OBSCURING THEIR SHAPES... BUT NOT THEIR STRENGTHS... NOT THEIR VAMPIRIC POWERS.
YOU'RE GOOD, CRUDS--I'LL GIVE YA THAT.
BUT IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW GOOD YOU ARE--
--'CAUSE BLADE IS BETTER!

WHAT?
HOLY JUMPIN' CRUD--IT CAN'T BE!!
KIDS! THEY'RE KIDS!
MORE THAN CHILDREN, FOOL--AS YOU'LL SOON LEARN!
WE ARE DEATH--YOUR DEATH!
WE HAVE LIVED HERE FOR CENTURIES, BLADE--PREYING ON THE BLOOD OF ADULT HUMANS...
DESTROYING ALL WHO COME WITHIN OUR GRASP!
DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT WE ARE, BLADE? DO YOU?
WE STAY HERE ALONE, ALL OF US CHILDREN OF ETERNITY. WE NEVER CHANGE--NEVER AGE--WE NEVER DIE!
FOR ONLY FOOLS DIE--AND WE ARE HARDLY FOOLS.
GREAT GOING, HANDSOME. NOW WHAT?
DO I ATTACK 'EM? WIPE 'EM OUT?
GOD! I DON'T KNOW! I DON'T KNOW!
YOUR INDECISION ONLY FEEDS US, FOOL.
AS YOU SHALL FEED OUR BLOOD-LUST!

DON'T BET ON IT, FANGS.
REALLY, SCUM? THEN LET'S SEE WHAT THE ALL-POWERFUL VAMPIRE SLAYER CAN DO...
...TO AN INNOCENT CHILD! THING!
COME ON NOW, BLADE-- I'M HELPLESS. ONE THRUST OF YOUR KNIFE WILL KILL ME.
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR, BLADE?
OH MY GOD--
I CAN'T DO IT...
I GOTTA WIPE 'IM OUT-- BUT I CAN'T.
DAMMIT! I CAN'T!
HE'S A FREAKIN' KID!
SKANK!
AND THAT, DEAR, STUPID, MORTAL, IS WHY YOU HUMANS MUST EVENTUALLY GIVE WAY TO OUR RACE.
YOU ARE TOO SOFT... TOO WEAK TO PUT YOUR HEART TO THE TEST OF TRUE BATTLE!

IT IS TRUE, ISN'T IT, BLADE? THE ONLY REASON YOU HESITATED BEFORE THRUSTING YOUR KNIFE IN ME IS THAT YOU SAW A CHILD'S FACE FOR MINE.
BUT I'M NO CHILD, BLADE, NOT IN AGE. FOR I HAVE LIVED HERE FOR THREE HUNDRED YEARS--
--AS HAVE MY FELLOW CREATURES OF THE NIGHT.
WE MAY APPEAR AS YOUTH--BUT IN TRUTH... WE ARE OLDER THAN ANY HUMAN!
OLDER, AND WISER, BLADE. FOR, OUR INTELECTS HAVE GROWN THROUGHOUT THE CENTURIES...
STUFF IT, CRUD! YOU AND YOUR KIDDY CONQUERERS AREN'T MAKING IT OUTTA THIS HELL-HOLE--
--LET ALONE INTO THE BIG-CITIES!
...AND CONQUER!
SOON, BLADE--ALL HUMAN CHILDREN WILL DIE! AND IN THEIR PLACE--A VAMPIRIC ARMY WILL RISE...
YOUR LITTLE PEP-TALK AWAKENED ME, FANGS--
--'CAUSE NOW THAT I KNOW WHAT YOU ARE--
--NOTHIN' GONNA STOP ME FROM KILLIN' YOU!

YOU TALKED TOO MUCH, CREEPS--'CAUSE MAYBE I DID HAVE A MENTAL BLOCK ABOUT DESTROYING YOU--
--BUT NO MORE!
NO MATTER WHAT YOU SEEM TO BE, I KNOW YOU'RE JUST THE STINKIN' UNDEAD--
AN' I JUST GOTTA KEEP TELLIN' MYSELF THAT.
CONVINCIN' MYSELF THAT YOU AREN'T REAL KIDS!
AN' IF I BELIEVE WHAT I KNOW TO BE TRUE--
--THERE'S NO WAY IN HELL THAT YOU'RE GONNA WIN!
...UNDERSTAND?
BLADE IS QUIET AS HE SLOWLY STEPS FROM THE ANCIENT MANSION BACK INTO THE BONE-CHILLING COLD!
BUT HE DOESN'T NOTICE THE WEATHER ...DOESN'T CARE ABOUT THE RAIN. IN TRUTH, HE DOESN'T EVEN WANT TO THINK ABOUT ANYTHING.
HE JUST WANTS TO FORGET WHAT HAD TO BE DONE.
HE JUST WANTS TO FORGET.

JEFFERSON CORT... YOU ARE IN TROUBLE. SOMEBODY IS GOING TO KILL ALL THE BUTTERFLIES... AND LEAVE YOU STANDING ON THE MANGLED WINGS... HOLDING ONTO THE NET!
OR DO YOU FEEL THAT HAS ALREADY HAPPENED WITH YOUR LIFE?
CORT STARES OUT THE WINDSHIELD AND SEES TOMORROW AND YESTERDAY. THE IMAGES ARE IRRECONCILABLE.
THE GIRL ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD IS A SPECTRAL TARGET. BUTTERFLY IN TRANSIT. SHE REMINDS HIM OF RUTH... AND HE WISHES RUTH'S APARTMENT WAS HIS DESTINATION TONIGHT. HIS PLACE WILL BE SO EMPTY WITHOUT HER.
RUTH, DEAR RUTH, HE ASKS THE NIGHT, WHAT IS HAPPENING TO US? HOW CAN I APPEAR BEFORE THAT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE TOMORROW, LOOKING NEAT AND BRIGHT AND WITHOUT FLAWS WHEN OUR ANGRY WORDS LIE BEHIND MY FLESH AND EYES AND LIPS?
THINK YOU'VE GOT TROUBLES NOW, JEFFERSON CORT?
THEY ARE JUST ABOUT TO BEGIN!
THE REALITY MANIPULATORS
PLOOG

Story: Don McGregor Art: Mike Ploog Tones: Marie Severin

SECONDS! THAT'S ALL IT TAKES.
A CAR MAY BE A NECESSITY OR A LUXURY, BUT IT STILL HAS THE WEIGHT AND VELOCITY TO UNLEASH A LETHAL POTENTIAL.

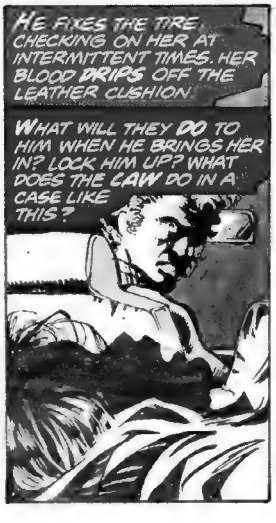
METAL DENTS UNDER THE IMPACT, RUINING THE POLISHED FINISH OF THE CAR.
FLESH BECOMES MEAT AND BONE, RIPPED AND SPLINTERED. INCAPABLE OF ITS OWN MOVEMENT.

THE SIGHT OF THE GIRL, ARMS FLUTTERING, RISING UP PAST HIS EYES IS STILL WITH CORT AS HE DASHES FROM THE CAR.
SHE LIES IN THE MIST, BLEEDING. THE WET MOSS ABSORBS HER BLOOD. THE SILVER NIGHT TURNS CRIMSON!

MISS?
PLEASE, MISS. ARE YOU... ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
OH SWEET LORD, PLEASE BE ALL RIGHT.
I TRIED TO SWERVE OUT THE WAY. IT WAS THE TIRE, BLEW RIGHT OUT FROM UNDER ME. CAN'T UNDERSTAND THAT, 'CAUSE THEY'RE NEW.

PLEASE ANSWER ME, MISS.
YOU'LL BE ALL RIGHT. I'LL... I'LL FIX THE TIRE... GET YOU TO A...
RUTH?
RUTH!!

HE HAS HELD THIS WOMAN COUNTLESS TIMES. HE HAS FELT HER WARMTH. NOW SHE IS COLD, AND SHE LIES LIMP AND BROKEN. A GLIMPSE OF THIGH IS NO LONGER PROVOCATIVE.
RUTH, IF YOU COULD ONLY SPEAK TO ME.
HOW'D YOU GET OUT HERE? IT...IT JUST DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE, HONEY.
NONE!


HE FIXES THE TIRE, CHECKING ON HER AT INTERMITTENT TIMES. HER BLOOD DRIPS OFF THE LEATHER CUSHION.
WHAT WILL THEY DO TO HIM WHEN HE BRINGS HER IN? LOCK HIM UP? WHAT DOES THE CAW DO IN A CASE LIKE THIS?

CORT CURSES HIMSELF BITTERLY. WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH YOU, MAN, HE CRIES IN SILENT SELF RECRIMINATION. RUTH IS DYING, AND ALL YOU CAN THINK ABOUT IS YOURSELF.
IT'S NOT OVER CORT!
IT'S NOT OVER BY A LONG SHOT!

A HAND, ONCE FEMININE WITH LONG DELICATE FINGERS, CLUTCHES HIDEOUSLY AT HIS SHOULDER! THE SHARP POINT OF A BROKEN WRIST BONE PROTRUDES FROM HER FLESH.

HER MOUTH, ONCE PARTED WITH DESIRE, NOW TWISTS OPEN GROTESQUELY.
HER TEETH ARE DISCOLORED BY STREAKS OF BLOOD!
JEFF... WHY DID YOU DO THIS TO ME?
YOU SAID YOU LOVED ME.

YOU DON'T DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS TO SOMEONE YOU LOVE.
HE ONCE THOUGHT PEOPLE SCREAMED ONLY IN MOVIES, AND THAT FAINTING SPELLS FOR WOMEN WERE WRITER'S DEVICES. TOTALLY UNREALISTIC.
CORT SCREAMS!

--BUT MEN DON'T CRY, HE TELLS HIMSELF, PURSUING HER.
ESPECIALLY GARAGE MECHANICS, THEY NEVER CRY, EVEN WHEN THEY ARE GOING TO TESTIFY BEFORE A COURTROOM OF CONGRESSMEN.

EVEN NOW, THE GREASE IS STILL IMBEDDED UNDER HIS FINGERNAILS, THOUGH HE WASHES HIS HANDS ENDLESSLY, IT IS ALWAYS THERE.
THE GREASE WILL NOT LET HIM CRY. IT IS A TESTAMENT TO HIS MANHOOD!

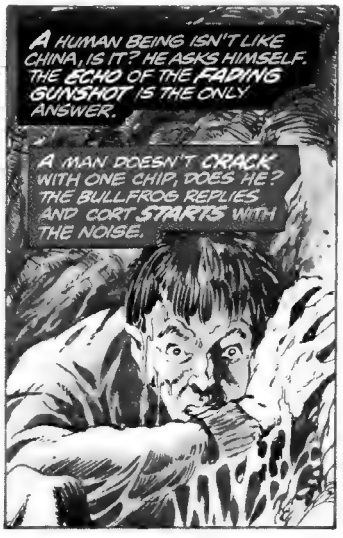
HE STUMBLES INTO MARSHLAND. A BULLFROG PROTESTS HIS INTRUSION, AND HE CRIES... CRIES FOR RUTH... AND HIMSELF!

CRIES AND FEELS THE TEARS SLIDE OVER HIS GREASY FINGERS, AND FEELS AT ONCE ASHAMED, BUT HE CANNOT STOP.

DON'T BLOW IT, PHILLIP.
I DON'T EVER MISS... YOU KNOW THAT!
RUTH! PLEASE COME OUT. STOP THIS GAME OF HIDE AND SEEK.

I DIDN'T MEAN TO HURT YOU. I STILL DON'T KNOW HOW YOU GOT OUT HERE IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHE...
THE DEAFENING SILENCE EXPLODES WITH THE GUNSHOT. IT IS A SOUND CORT HAS SELDOM HEARD IN REAL LIFE... BUT IMMEDIATELY, INSTINCTIVELY HE KNOWS WHAT IT IS.

THE MURKY WATER IS COLD, FLIRTING UP HIS TROUSER LEG, HUGGING HIS SHIRT TO HIS BODY.
HE HOLDS ONTO HIS SHOULDERS, AS IF THAT WILL KEEP HIM IN ONE PIECE.


A HUMAN BEING ISN'T LIKE CHINA, IS IT? HE ASKS HIMSELF. THE ECHO OF THE FADING GUNSHOT IS THE ONLY ANSWER.
A MAN DOESN'T CRACK WITH ONE CHIP, DOES HE? THE BULLFROG REPLIES AND CORT STARTS WITH THE NOISE.

AND THEN THERE IS ANOTHER SOUND!
IT COMES FROM HIS LEFT, FROM THE INTERIOR OF THE SWAMP, A SOUND THAT CATCHES THE AIR IN HIS LUNGS. A SOFT, OOZING SOUND. BLOOD BEING SUCKED NOISILY THROUGH A STRAW!
RUTH?

SHE RISES LANGUIDLY, REACHING OUT FOR HIM.
IT IS NOT AN ENTICING GESTURE, IT IS A PROFANITY OF AFFECTION.
SHE SPEAKS, AND IT IS RUTH'S VOICE, AND THE WORDS ISSUE FROM LIPS THAT DRIP DARKLY GREEN SLIME.

WHY DID YOU DO IT, JEFF? WAS IT BECAUSE, LAST NIGHT, I ACCUSED YOU OF TRYING TO PROVE YOUR MANHOOD BY TESTIFYING AT THIS RINKY-DINK COMMITTEE MAKING BELIEVE IT'S EXPOSING CITY GRAFT WHILE USING YOU AS A PRIME WITNESS!
WHY DON'T YOU TRY PROVING IT IN BED?
ONE CHIP MIGHT NOT DO IT, JEFFERSON CORT, BUT HOW ABOUT TWO... OR BETTER STILL... THREE CHIPS INTO THE PSYCHE?

CORT FLEES, BUT THE VOICE CHASES AFTER HIM--
--CONDEMNING--
--AND DAMNING!
VINES THRUST THEMSELVES IN FRONT OF HIS THROAT--
--GNARLED ROPES TWIST OUT OF THE MUD THAT CLUTCHES AT HIS RUNNING FEET.
HE IS NOT USED TO RUNNING AND THE FACT SOUNDS HARSHLY THROUGH HIS GASPING LIPS.
A WARM GLOW PIERCES THE DARK SPANISH MOSS EMBRACES THE SCENE
BETTER THINK THIS OUT, CORT, BABY. YOU PROBABLY LOOK LIKE THE FRANKENSTEIN MONSTER IN "THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN." UNLESS THAT'S A BLIND MAN IN THERE, YOU'LL SCARE THE HELL OUT OF HIM.
STEALTHILY, HIS BREATHING STILL LOUD AND FIERCE, HE APPROACHES THE CABIN.
IN HIS MIND, HE ARGUES WITH RUTH THAT IT WAS NOTHING LIKE SHE CLAIMED. HIS DECIDING TO TESTIFY WAS NO MACHISMO ACT. JUST THAT... SOMEBODY HAS TO TAKE A STAND ...AND HOPE THE WHOLE THING ISN'T A SHAM!
THE GROWL BRINGS HIM UP SHORT--
-- SCATTERING HIS THOUGHTS--
--ALONG WITH INTIMATE MEMORIES OF RUTH THAT ARE FREE FROM CONDEMNATION.
WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU, REAPER? YOU'RE THE DAMNDEST PAIN IN THE ASS I EVER HEERD!
WELL, NOW, WAIT A SEC, REAP, OLD BOY, I MIGHTA BEEN A BIT QUICK WITH JUDGEMENT. WHUT YOU DOING OUT HERE, BOY?
AN ACCIDENT... UP ON THE ROAD... MY CAR!
I SWEAR YOU'RE SPEAKING GIBBERISH.
SOMEBODY SHOT AT ME!
WHUT'S THAT?
I CAME DOWN HERE, LOOKING FOR RUTH. AN' SOMEBODY SHOT AT ME!
WITH A GUN?
WHAT ELSE DO PEOPLE SHOOT AT EACH OTHER WITH?

HEH HEH. THAT'S SOME SENSA HUMOR YOU GOT THERE, BOY. WHUT'D YOU SAY YOUR NAME WUZ?
CORT. JEFFERSON CORT.
LOOK, MY GIRL'S BACK THERE SOME-WHERE.
SHORE SHE IS. BETCHA SHE'D RATHER SEE YOU ALONE, BOY. BUT IF'N YOU WANT OLD AMOS T. TO TAKE A LOOK AT THIS SPOT WHERE'S YOU SAY SUMBODY SHOT ATCHA, YOU JUST LEAD THE WAY.

RIGHT HERE!
OH, WAIT A MINUTE. I DON'T BELIEVE THIS. A SLUG TOOK A CHUNK OUT OF THAT TREE RIGHT ABOVE MY HEAD.
RIGHT WHERE?

SHORE IT DID, BOY. WHERE'S THIS GIRL OF YOURS GONE TO?
I DON'T.. KNOW.
SHE'S HURT.. I THINK SHE'S HURT BAD. BUT I DON'T KNOW WHERE SHE IS.

YOU FOLLER ME BACK TO MY PLACE, BOY. CAIN'T LEAVE YOU OUT HERE, YOU'LL GETCHA SELF MORE MESSED UP'N YOU ALREADY ARE.
BETTER STEP ON IT, GINGER. PHASE THREE IS DUE TO COMMENCE.
THIS'LL KILL HIM.

THE AIR IN THE CABIN IS COMPOSED OF BURNT COFFEE GROUNDS, BACON GREASE, AND A SUFFOCATING BLEND OF PIPE TOBACCO THAT CORT IS SURE MUST BE BANNED ON THE OPEN MARKET.
YOU KNOW, I HATE TO TELL YA THIS, BOY, BUT SOUND CARRIES A LONG WAYS OUT HERE--
--AN' NOT TO ADD TO YOUR TROUBLES, BUT IF'N A SHOT WUZ FIRED... OLD AMOS T. WOULDA HEERD IT.

I WAS JUST THINKING THAT SAME THING.
LOOK, YOU MIND IF I USE YOUR PHONE?
LOOKS LIKE YORE ALREADY AT IT, BOY.
THE SHIRT CLINGS DAMPLY, DOESN'T IT, JEFFERSON CORT? AND YOU WONDER IF YOU'LL EVER BE WARM AGAIN.

CORT STANDS AT THE PHONE, AND THOUGH HE IS CHILLED HE BEGINS TO SWEAT AS HE TRIES TO REMEMBER THE STATE PROSECUTOR'S PHONE NUMBER.
LET'S SEE, 754 IS THE EXCHANGE. YEAH, BUT IS IT 86 OR 68? OR...
AMOS T.!
A SLOW SQUEEK FROM THE DOORWAY MAKES HIM LOOK UP.
RUTH STANDS THERE, DRIPPING BLOOD AND FEN WATER ONTO THE WOODEN FLOOR.

WHATSA MATTER, BOY?
WHAT THE... DON'T YOU SEE HER?!!
SEE WHO? THERE AIN'T NOBODY HERE. YOU BEEN MESSIN' ROUND WITH SOMMA THAT FUNNY WEED.
I'VE COME FOR YOU, JEFF. JULIETT FOR HER ROMEO. WE DIE TOGETHER!

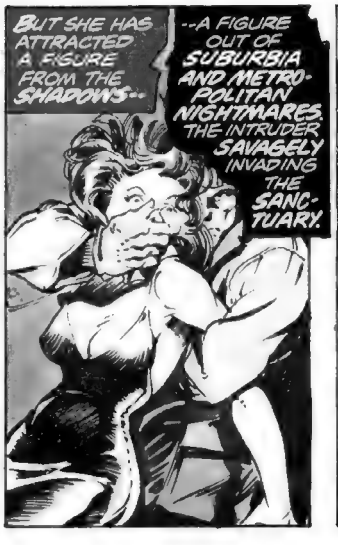
HEY, WHUT YOU THINK. YORE UP TO?
YOU WANTED TO CARRESS ME LAST NIGHT, JEFF, SWEET.
COME, SPEND THE CAST MOMENTS OF YOUR LIFE IN MY ARMS.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU ARE... BUT I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE NOT--
--YOU'RE NOT MY RUTH!

HEY, BOY, YOU HAVIN' OF OF THEM THERE HALO-SIN-ATIONS.
YOU GIMME BACK THAT PIECE FORE THEM MARY J. WANNA DREAMS OF YORN GET SUMBODY HURT!
IT HAPPENS AS QUICKLY AS THE CAR ACCIDENT. AMOS GRABS FOR THE RIFLE, YANKING IT TOWARD HIM, AND THE SHOTGUN SEEMS TO FIRE ITSELF INTO HIS CHEST.
A MOMENT AGO, YOU THOUGHT YOU'D REDISCOVERED REALITY. HADN'T YOU, JEFFERSON CORT? YOU REFOUND IT IN THE SMELL OF A CHOKING PIPE AND THE SMELL OF BACON GREASE AND AMOS T.'S VOICE.
BUT ALL THAT'S GONE NOW. SAY GOODBYE TO IT, JEFFERSON CORT.

IT WASN'T A GREAT REALITY, BUT IT WAS BETTER THAN THE HORROR FANTASY IN WHICH HE'D BEEN SNARED. BUTTERFLIES RIPPED AND MOTIONLESS... WAITING TO BE MATTED!
AS HE CALLS LAWYER PRINE'S NUMBER HESITANTLY (IS IT 68 OR 86?) HE WONDERS HOW ANYONE CAN GET OFF ON SPLATTERING GUTS AND RIPPED INTESTINES.
AND WHAT FRIGHTENS HIM MOST, IS THAT SOME PEOPLE DO.
NATHAN... THIS IS CORT!
WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? YOU CAN'T HAVE FORGOTTEN THE TRIAL CONVENES TOMORROW?
I NEED HELP, NATE. I JUST KILLED AN OLD MAN... AND SOMEBODY WHO LOOKS LIKE RUTH AND KNOWS ALL ABOUT US, BUT...
DON'T GO ANYWHERE ELSE. GET YOURSELF OVER TO MY OFFICE... QUICK!

HER NAME IS RUTH JORDAN--
--AND SHE HAS SPENT THE LAST HOUR AND A HALF SHINING HER NAILS, BOTH FINGERS AND TOES--
--SPRAYING HER HAIR WITH A SCENT THAT LOWERS THE OXYGEN CONTENT IN THE ROOM--

--AND HAS GONE THROUGH HER WARDROBE TRYING TO DECIDE WHAT TO WEAR.
IT IS MUCH LIKE THE PLUMMAGE OF THE PEACOCK... EXCEPT RUTH ISN'T TRYING TO ATTRACT A MATE.

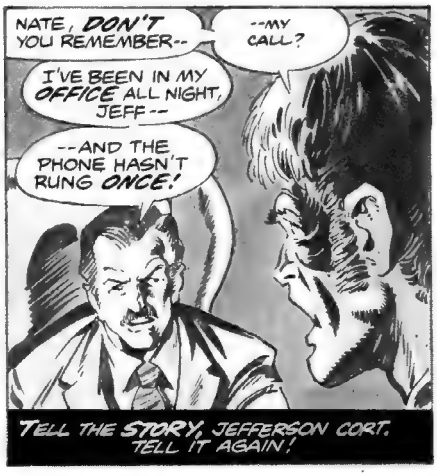

BUT SHE HAS ATTRACTED A FIGURE FROM THE SHADOWS--
--A FIGURE OUT OF SUBURBIA AND METROPOLITAN NIGHTMARES. THE INTRUDER SAVAGELY INVADING THE SANCTUARY.

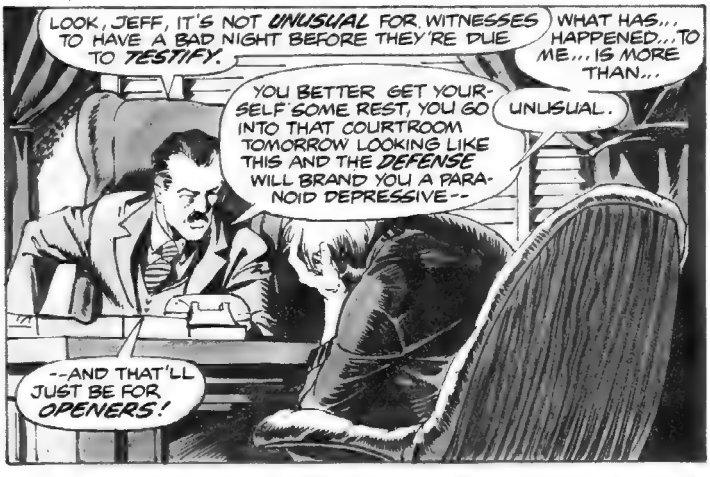
RUTH GASPS, BREATHING DEEPLY, AND THE ANESTHESIA FILLS HER LUNGS--
--BUT DOES NOT DIMINISH THE FEAR IN HER EYES--

--NOT EVEN WHEN HER EYELIDS FLUTTER CLOSED DOES THE TERROR ABATE! BUTTERFLY WINGS STRUGGLE SPASMODICALLY... AND BECOME STILL!
EMOTIONLESSLY ALMOST LIKE AN AUTO-MATION, THE MAN BEGINS HIS TASK, OBLIVIOUS TO HER SEXUALITY...

--AND CAPITALIZING, EFFICIENTLY, ON HER VULNERABILITY!

ANOTHER CHIP IN THE CHINA. THE CRACK SPREADS JAGGEDLY, SLICING INTO THE BRAIN.
JEFF, YOU LOOK LIKE HELL. WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?
I TOLD YOU OVER THE PHONE.
YOU TOLD ME WHAT OVER THE PHONE?


NATE, DON'T YOU REMEMBER--
--MY CALL?
I'VE BEEN IN MY OFFICE ALL NIGHT, JEFF--
--AND THE PHONE HASN'T RUNG ONCE!
TELL THE STORY, JEFFERSON CORT. TELL IT AGAIN!

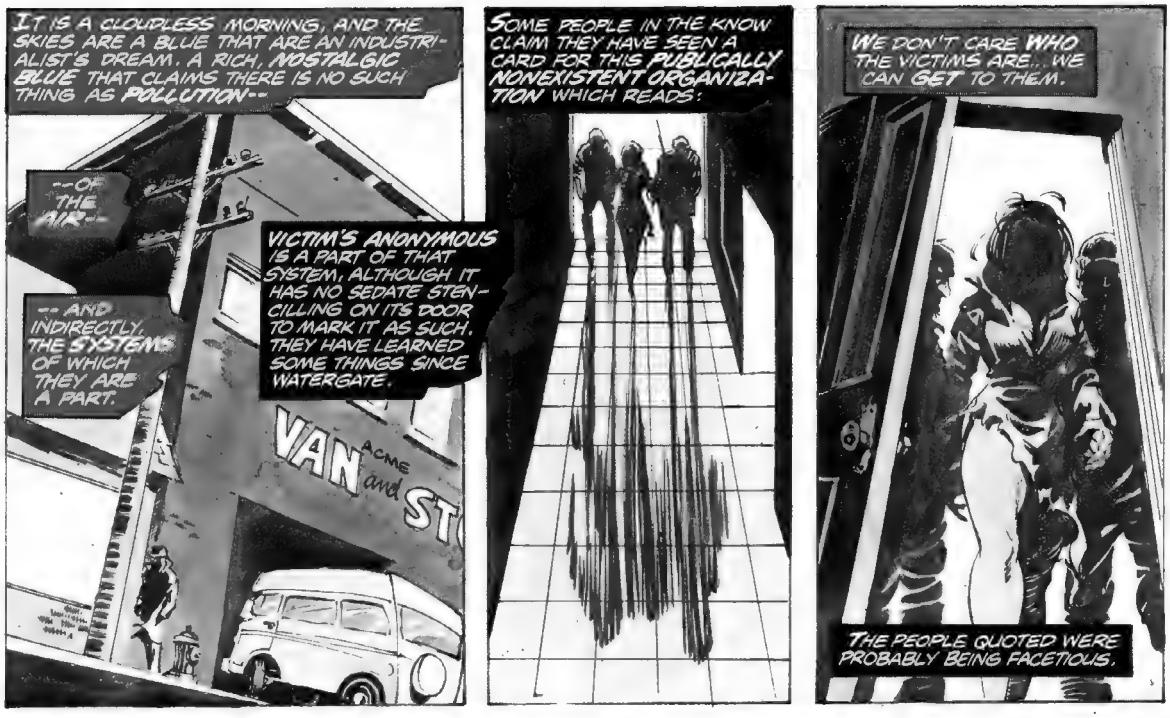

LOOK, JEFF, IT'S NOT UNUSUAL FOR WITNESSES TO HAVE A BAD NIGHT BEFORE THEY'RE DUE TO TESTIFY.
WHAT HAS... HAPPENED... TO ME... IS MORE THAN...
YOU BETTER GET YOURSELF SOME REST, YOU GO INTO THAT COURTROOM TOMORROW LOOKING LIKE THIS AND THE DEFENSE WILL BRAND YOU A PARANOID DEPRESSIVE--
UNUSUAL.
--AND THAT'LL JUST BE FOR OPENERS!

PARANOID DEPRESSIVE?
HOW ABOUT SCHIZOPHRENIC, JEFFERSON CORT? OR BETTER STILL, WHY NOT LABEL YOU A PSYCHO-SEXUAL DEVIATE?
GOD, THEY'VE GOT ENOUGH TERMS TO DRIVE A MAN CRAZY!
WITH THAT THOUGHT, HE SEES THE GUN!

HE REACHES FOR IT, ALMOST ASKING ALOUD WHAT IN HELL IS IT DOING OUT OF HIS BEDROOM DRESSER.

THE DOOR OPENS, BUT THIS ONE IS SILENT.
MUD AND BLOOD AND MARSH PULP DRIP ONTO THE RUG!
IT IS THAT SOUND THAT CORT HEARS FIRST!

A VOICE SPEAKS, AND IT IS RUTH'S, THOUGH HER LIPS DO NOT APPEAR TO MOVE.
SHE STAGGERS TOWARD HIM AWKWARDLY!
I'VE COME FOR YOU, JEFF, DARLING.
IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW MANY TIMES YOU KILL ME, I'LL KEEP COMING BACK--
--UNTIL I TAKE YOU WITH ME!
HE HAD BOUGHT THE GUN FOR PROTECTION!
READ THE EVENING NEWSPAPERS OR TURN ON THE 6 O'CLOCK NEWS, THEY WILL GIVE YOU A DOZEN REASONS TO FEEL YOU NEED PROTECTION.
HE CANNOT STOP PULLING THE TRIGGER, EVEN AS SHE CLAWS SLUGGISHLY AT HIM, LEAVING A TRAIL OF MUCK AND SANGUINEOUS SLAUGHTER DOWN HIS CHEST--
--LEGS--
--ANKLES!
THE BUTTERFLY HAS LOST ITS BEAUTY.
AND THEN HE REALIZES THAT RUTH'S VOICE IS STILL SPEAKING..
AND THE MUTILATED FLESH BEGINS TO VANISH, LEAVING HER FACE UNSCARRED, AS IF NOTHING HAD EVER HAPPENED TO IT!
--LEAVING HIM HOLDING ONTO HER, WISHING HER BACK TO LIFE AND WEEPING BITTERLY, THE SECOND TIME THIS NIGHT HE HAS WEPT--
--AND BOTH TIMES THE TEARS ACCOMPLISH NOTHING!
IT'S STRANGE, ISN'T IT, JEFFERSON CORT, BUT AS THE MECHANICAL LAMENT OF POLICE SIRENS FILL THE ROOM WITH DRAMATIC BACKROUND MUSIC, YOU REALIZE THE BUTTERFLY ANALOGY IS TRUE FOR YOU, ALSO--
--AND YOUR WINGS, LIKE RUTH'S, HAVE BEEN JUST AS EFFECTIVELY BROKEN!


IT IS A CLOUDLESS MORNING, AND THE SKIES ARE A BLUE THAT ARE AN INDUSTRIALIST'S DREAM. A RICH, NOSTALGIC BLUE THAT CLAIMS THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS POLLUTION--
--OF THE AIR--
-- AND INDIRECTLY, THE SYSTEMS OF WHICH THEY ARE A PART.
VICTIM'S ANONYMOUS IS A PART OF THAT SYSTEM, ALTHOUGH IT HAS NO SEDATE STENCILLING ON ITS DOOR TO MARK IT AS SUCH. THEY HAVE LEARNED SOME THINGS SINCE WATERGATE.
ACME
VAN and ST
SOME PEOPLE IN THE KNOW CLAIM THEY HAVE SEEN A CARD FOR THIS PUBLICALLY NONEXISTENT ORGANIZATION WHICH READS:
WE DON'T CARE WHO THE VICTIMS ARE... WE CAN GET TO THEM.
THE PEOPLE QUOTED WERE PROBABLY BEING FACETIOUS.

PHILIP, I REALLY LIKE PLAYING THESE OLD GEEZERS. IT'S A PART YOU CAN GET INTO.
UNDERSTAND ME, BOY?
JEEZ, DID HE FALL FOR IT HOOK, LINE AND SINKER... OR DID HE FALL FOR IT?
YOU WOULD, TOO, MR. FIST, IF SOMEONE AS EFFICIENT AS WE ARE WENT AFTER YOU.

FIST, YOUR MAKEUP WAS SUPERB, MAKING THE REAL RUTH HUDSON UP WAS A MASTERSTROKE.
AND, BERNARD GOT THAT TAPE RECORDING OUT OF THE CORRIDOR LONG BEFORE THE COPS GOT THERE.
A HAPPY ENDING, ALL IN ALL.
AND YOUR RIGGING OF THE LAWYER'S PHONE WAS PERFECT.
WHEN YOU CAN'T EVEN TRUST A COMMON-PLACE IRRITANT LIKE A FLAT TIRE--
FILE 3786
CORT, JEFF
--WHAT CAN YOU TRUST?
AND THE FACE MASK LIES DISCARDED LIKE THE REFUSE OF THE VICTIMS' LIVES.
FILE 3786
CORT, JEFF
CLOSED
AT THIS RATE, BUTTERFLIES COULD MAKE THE ENDANGERED SPIECIES LIST WITHIN THE DECADE!

"EGYPT. SAND SIFTS LIKE THE DUST OF AGES OVER SUN-RAPED, ARID GROUND. AND EACH GRAIN SEEMS TO WHISPER OF SECRETS HIDDEN, PREGNANT IN THE SOIL.
"IT WHISPERS OF ANCIENT KINGS AND GODS, WHISPERS THAT DRAW MEN IN SEARCH OF KNOWLEDGE AND FAME, ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXPEDITIONS...
"...EXPEDITIONS SUCH AS THIS, ORGANIZED BY DR. LIONEL HUMPHRIES, WHICH DISCOVERED THIS WOMB OF HISTORY.
MY GOD! I HAVE HEARD THE LEGENDS... OVER AND OVER AGAIN! BUT I'M A MAN OF SCIENCE, HUMPHRIES... HOW CAN SUCH A CREATURE BE POSSIBLE ??!
CURSE of ANUBIS!

Plot: Russ Jones Story: John Warner Art: Val Mayerik

"1922--THE 18th YEAR OF THE AEON OF HORUS. BRONZE-FLESHED MEN SWEATED BENEATH A RELENTLESSLY BLAZING SUN -- YET I SENSED A GREATER TENSENESS!
SIR THOMPSON... THIS HEAT IS INHUMAN! I SUGGEST WE GIVE THE WORKERS A SHORT REST PERIOD.
YOU'RE TOO SOFT, DR. HUMPHRIES! WE'RE ON TO SOMETHING HERE-- LET THE BLIGHTERS EARN THEIR PAY!
"SUN. WORK. TEMPERAMENT--
"--TENSENESS; A VIRUS IN INCUBATION--
"--SO EASILY--
"--PAIN-FULLY--
"--BECOMES FEAR!
EEE-YAAHHH!
"MY OWN ALARM ECHOED BUT WAS DROWNED IN THE WORKERS' SCREAMS OF AGONY. I KNEW THE REPERCUSSIONS THAT WERE TO COME FROM THIS FEAR, BUT I WOULD NOT BE STOPPED...!
THE SERPENT! IT IS GUIDED BY THE SPIRITS OF THOSE WHO WATCH OVER THE TREASURES OF THE ANCIENTS! WE WILL BE CURSED IF WE...
BALDERDASH! A COBRA WAS DISTURBED AND CHOSE, AS ITS INSTINCTS DIRECTED, TO DEFEND ITSELF. NO MORE, NO LESS... AND NO CURSE!
"SIR HUMPHRIES PRESSED HIS POINT, BUT LITTLE CAME OF IT! THE MEN FLED...
RUDDY HEATHEN COWARDS! BELIEVING ALL THAT ROT ABOUT CURSES FROM ANCIENT GODS...!
WELL, LADS, THE WORK GETS HARDER FROM HERE ON IN... BUT WE WILL CONTINUE... JUST THE FOUR OF US!
"THE WIND STIRRED AND SEEMED TO SPEAK TO THE WHISPERING SAND! HUMPHRIES AND THE OTHERS MADE NO REPLY, FEELING A SLIGHT SHIVER IN SPITE OF THE MID-DAY HEAT...
"WORK WAS RESUMED. I FELT BOTH RELIEF AND THE TENACIOUSNESS OF SUCCESS. BUT IN THE LATE AFTERNOON...
OVER HERE... QUICKLY! ALL OF YOU!
BY GEORGE, WE'VE DONE IT, LADS!

A TOMB-- AN UNOPENED TOMB! IT'S ALL OURS, GENTLEMEN!
WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR...LET'S OPEN HER UP!
NO! IT'S TOO LATE IN THE DAY! I PROPOSE A GOOD NIGHT'S REST THAT WE BE READY FOR A LONG DAY TOMORROW!
"HUMPHRIES WAS LESS THAN SATISFIED WITH THE WAITING POLICY-- NEEDLESS TO SAY, I WAS AS ANXIOUS AS HE! HUMPHRIES WAS A MAN TOO ACUTELY FEELING THE YEARS, STRUNG LIKE WEIGHTS ABOUT HIS NECK.
"THIS MIGHT VERY WELL BE HIS LAST TRIP TO EGYPT... HIS LAST CHANCE FOR THE FAME AND NOTORIETY THIS NEW TOMB PROMISED. I CAN SENSE THESE THINGS IN A MAN...
"HUMPHRIES WORKED NEARLY ALL NIGHT ON THE HIEROGLYPHICS ON THAT TOMB DOOR!
"DAWN SPLASHED TEPID AND GOLDEN OVER THE ENCAMPMENT; OVER MEN WHO HAD TOSSED AND TURNED, SUSPENDED IN A HALF-WAKING, HALF-SLEEPING DREAM FANTASY...
"...NOW THIS DRUG, ANTICIPATION, COURSED LIKE LIFE-GIVING ELIXIR THROUGH THEM, GIVING ANIMATION TO SUN-WEARIED BODIES...
THE SPIRIT OF THE MOON, GUARDIAN OF THE WAY... IF YOUR TRANSLATIONS ARE CORRECT, DR. HUMPHRIES, THAT'S WHAT WE WILL FIND DOWN HERE!
"MUSTY SHADOWS OF THE PAST PERISHED LIKE COBWEBS IN THE ONRUSH OF SWEET DESERT AIR...
"...AIR THAT HADN'T KISSED THESE TIME-CHASTE WALLS IN NEARLY AN AEON!
INCREDIBLE! NEVER IN MY LIFE HAVE I KNOWN A TOMB TO REACH THIS FAR DOWN! THE ENGINEERING ALONE IS STAGGERING-- LET ALONE THE SYMBOLIC IMPLICATIONS...
OBSERVE, THOMPSON, THE PARADOXES OF A CULTURE. THE DEPTH OF THIS CHAMBER-- THEY WERE DELIVERING THIS MAN TO HELL. YET THEY FEARED HIM ENOUGH TO LEAVE HIM WITH MORE TREASURE THAN I'VE SEEN IN A LIFETIME!

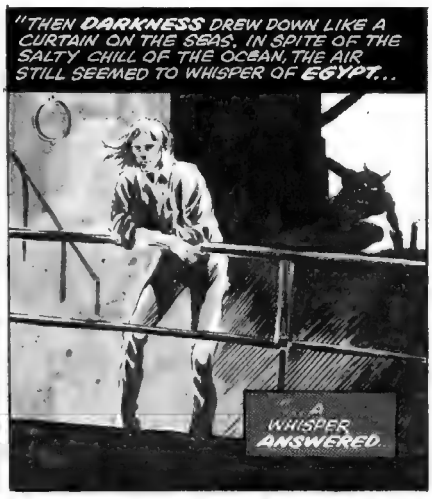
AGAIN, SIR THOMPSON, PARADOXES! THE ARCHITECTURE OF THIS TOMB INDICATES IT HOUSES SOMEONE OF GREAT IMPORTANCE!
YET THE SARCOPHAGUS IS HARDLY MORE ORNATE THAN THAT OF A FAVORED ROYAL SERVANT, AS IF...
SKIP THE PARADOXES, HUMPHRIES-- OUR QUESTIONS WILL BE BETTER ANSWERED WHEN WE REMOVE THE LID!
EASY, LADS-- THIS LID IS BLASTED HEAVY! SET IT DOWN GENTLY AND WATCH TO YOUR FINGERS, NOW!
BLIGHTERS... ALWAYS MAKING THINGS SO BLOODY DIFFICULT!
"THE LID SCRAPED DOWN, THE CHALKY BARK OF STONE ON STONE.
"A SOUND LOST ON MEN WHOSE EYES WERE TRANSFIXED IN ASTONISHMENT...
...GOD...
ANUBIS... IT- IT CAN'T BE! BUT IT IS! ANUBIS, "WATCHER OF THE DEAD!" A MERE LEGEND...
...YET I SEE HIM, FUR GRAFTED IMPERCEPTIBLY INTO FLESH...
WE ARE RATIONAL MEN, DR. HUMPHRIES! OUR MINDS TELL US THIS MUST BE A FAKE, BUT IT ISN'T AND THAT SCARES US-- BECAUSE ALL OF A BLOODY SUDDEN OUR BOOKS DON'T HAVE ANY ANSWERS!
OUCH...
DAMN!
STUPID... HAND SHAKING SO MUCH, I SLIPPED-- CUT MYSELF! STILL, IT'S LITTLE MORE THAN A SCRATCH. I'LL BE FINE!
ALL THE SAME, WE'D BETTER GET BACK TO CAMP AND TREAT THAT! IF IT GETS INFECTED, YOU COULD BE IN SERIOUS TROUBLE!

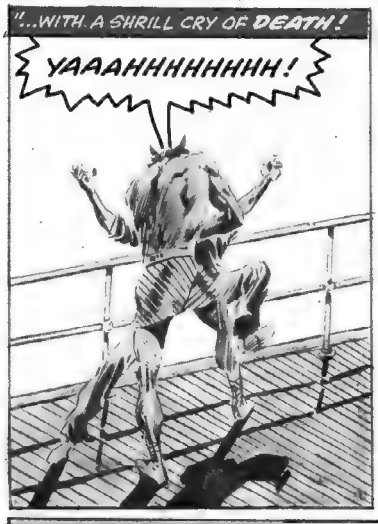
"NIGHT CLOAKED ITSELF ABOUT THE DIMINISHED ENCAMPMENT. EVERYONE SAT ABOUT IN SPEECH-LESS HUDDLES, SENSING AN ACUTE ILL-EASE EXCHANGING BETWEEN THEM...
"...THE LONELY SILENCE WAS BROKEN BY DR. HUMPHRIES...
REGINALD, I THINK WE SHOULD PACK UP THE--BODY--AND RETURN TO LONDON! IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT "IT" BE GIVEN PROPER STUDY!
AGREED...
ANUBIS MUST BE CAREFULLY STUDIED-- BUT TO LEAVE NOW WOULD ONLY UNNECESSARILY SLOW THINGS DOWN! NO, WE MUST HAVE TIME TO EXAMINE THE ARTIFACTS-- THEY HOLD THE KEY TO THIS PUZZLE!
NOW, GENTLEMEN, I SUGGEST WE TURN IN. WE'LL BE UP AGAIN WITH THE DAWN...
"HUMPHRIES WALKED AWAY WORDLESSLY...
"DAYS PASSED. THE MEN BUSIED THEMSELVES COLLECTING, EXAMINING AND CLASSIFYING ARTIFACTS. BUT ALL THE WHILE CONCERN AND TENSION GREW AMONGST DR. HUMPHRIES AND HIS STUDENTS...
I'M WORRIED, SIR THOMPSON... YOU HAVE BEEN WORKING YOURSELF INTO A TEDIUM...
...AND YOUR HAND-- IT HAS NOT BEEN HEALING WELL!
YOUR CONCERN HAS BEEN NOTED AND APPRECIATED... BUT I INSIST WE CONTINUE!

"THAT NIGHT, AS DARKNESS' GLOVED HAND BROUGHT THE STILLNESS OF SLEEP TO THE CAMP...
...UMMMPHHRR...
SKRIK!
HRUMFF... WHAT? THAT SHADOW...THOMPSON, IS THAT YOU?? ANSWER ME!??
"THAT ANSWER WAS NOT LONG IN COMING...
"...IT CAME SILENT AND SWIFT WITH A BLOOD FEVER THAT TORE THE SCREAM AWAY BEFORE HUMPHRIES COULD UTTER IT!
"HUMPHRIES WAS NOT A MAN WHO GAVE WAY EASILY TO FEAR, NOT EVEN OF DEATH! BUT IT WAS TERROR THAT WAS EMBLAZONED ON HIS FEATURES WHEN HE WAS FOUND...
"...THE NEXT MORNING!
LORD... BLIMEY!
HORRIBLE... SOME WILD DOG OR JACKAL! WELL THAT DOES IT...
...THE WORKMEN WE COULD LOSE, BUT NOT HUMPHRIES! WE RETURN TO LONDON...!
WE'LL LEAVE BEHIND SOME OF THE MORE COMMON RELICS, BUT THE REST GOES, ESPECIALLY THE THINGS WE FAILED TO IDENTIFY. AND, WHATEVER YOU DO, DON'T DROP ANUBIS THERE...
WE'RE STILL IN FOR A BLOODY AWFUL TIME CONVINCING THE ACADEMY IT'S NOT A HOAX!
"THE SUN BLAZED DOWN, TOUCHING WHITE THE SAND...
HOPEFULLY THIS FILL WILL KEEP THE DAMNED TOMB SCAVENGERS OUT WHEN OUR DISCOVERY IS ANNOUNCED...
...BUT I DOUBT IT!
"...SAND RETURNED TO PLACE, A DECEPTIVE TESTIMONY OF TIME AND PEACE, THAT RETAINS THE FLESH OF DR. HUMPHRIES IN GRIM MORTGAGE...

"THE TREK TO CAIRO WAS LONG AND TEDIOUS FOR THE MEN, BUT FROM THERE THE OCEAN STRETCHED OUT, A FAMILIAR BLUE-GREEN CARPET DRAWING US TO...

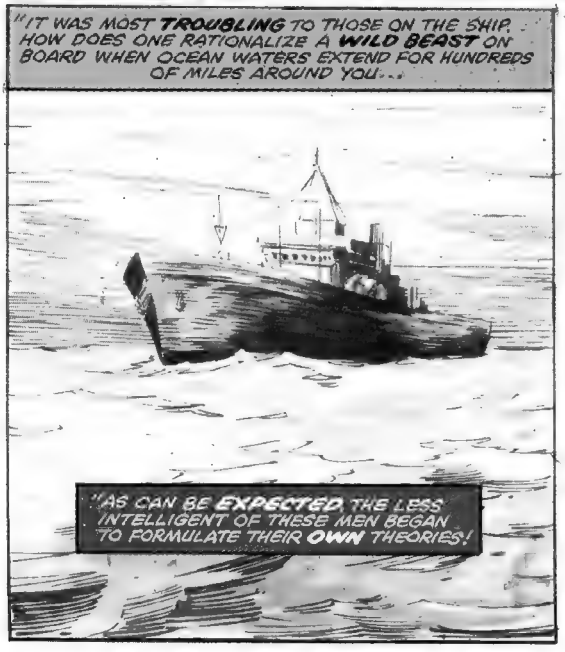
...ENGLAND! WAS I A FOOL NOT TO LISTEN TO HUMPHRIES WHEN HE WANTED TO RETURN? I FEEL OF A SUDDEN, SUCH AN URGENCY IN GETTING TO LONDON!
AT LEAST I'LL HAVE MOST OF THIS CATALOGUED WHEN WE ARRIVE!


"THEN DARKNESS DREW DOWN LIKE A CURTAIN ON THE SEAS. IN SPITE OF THE SALTY CHILL OF THE OCEAN, THE AIR STILL SEEMED TO WHISPER OF EGYPT...
A WHISPER ANSWERED.


"...WITH A SHRILL CRY OF DEATH!
YAAAHHHHHHHH!

"UPON THE SECOND NIGHT...
R-RR-RRRR

NO!
A!!!!!-YAAAHHH!

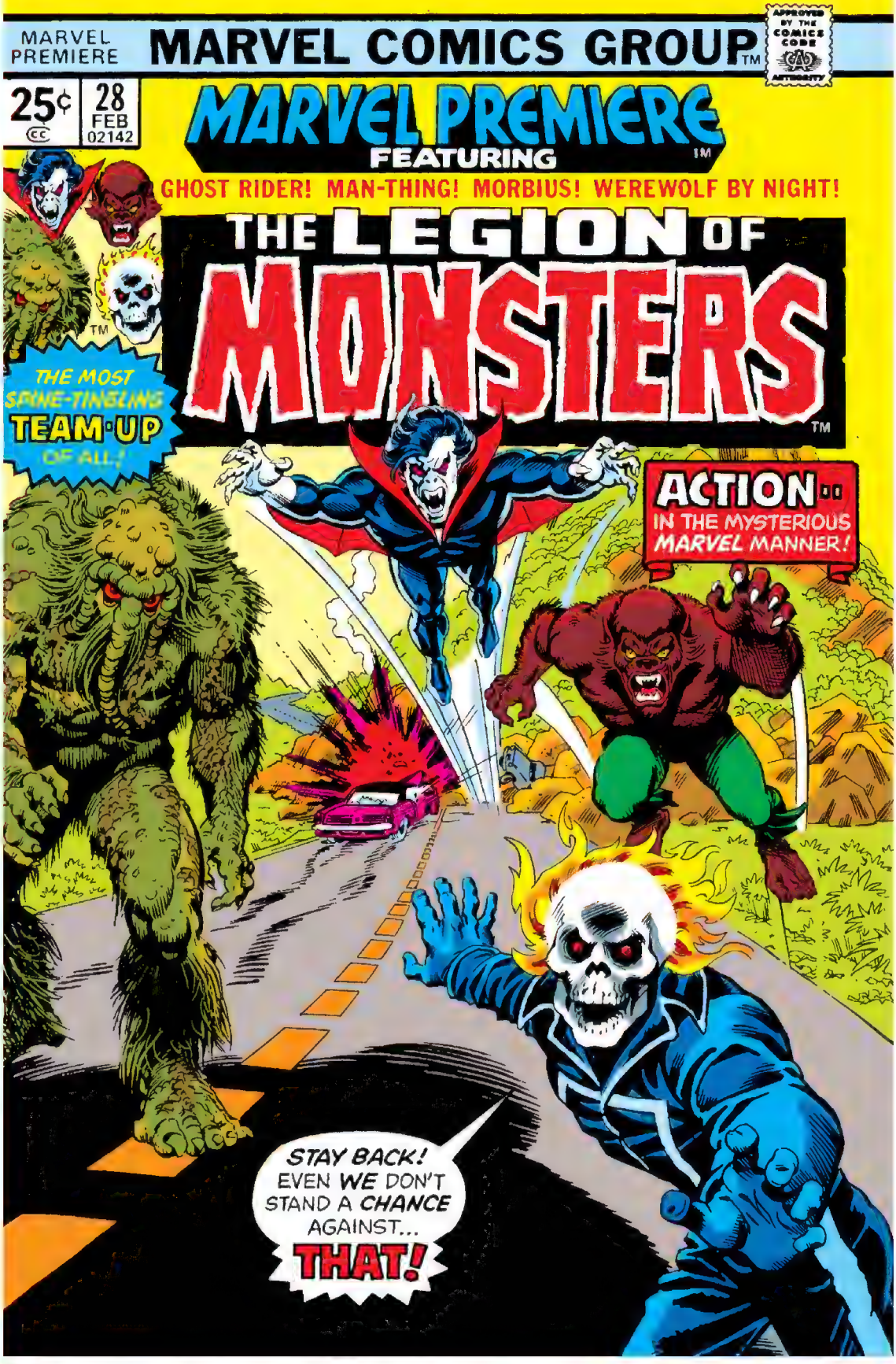

"IT WAS MOST TROUBLING TO THOSE ON THE SHIP. HOW DOES ONE RATIONALIZE A WILD BEAST ON BOARD WHEN OCEAN WATERS EXTEND FOR HUNDREDS OF MILES AROUND YOU...
"AS CAN BE EXPECTED THE LESS INTELLIGENT OF THESE MEN BEGAN TO FORMULATE THEIR OWN THEORIES!

...NOW YOU TAKE THAT SIR REGINALD THOMPSON -- A QUEER DUCK, THAT 'UN, IF YOU ASK ME!
I MUST BE SECRETIVE! IF THEY WERE EVER TO KNOW WHAT IS IN THAT SARCOPHAGUS -- WELL, THEY WOULD HARDLY BE UNDERSTANDING AT A TIME LIKE THIS!

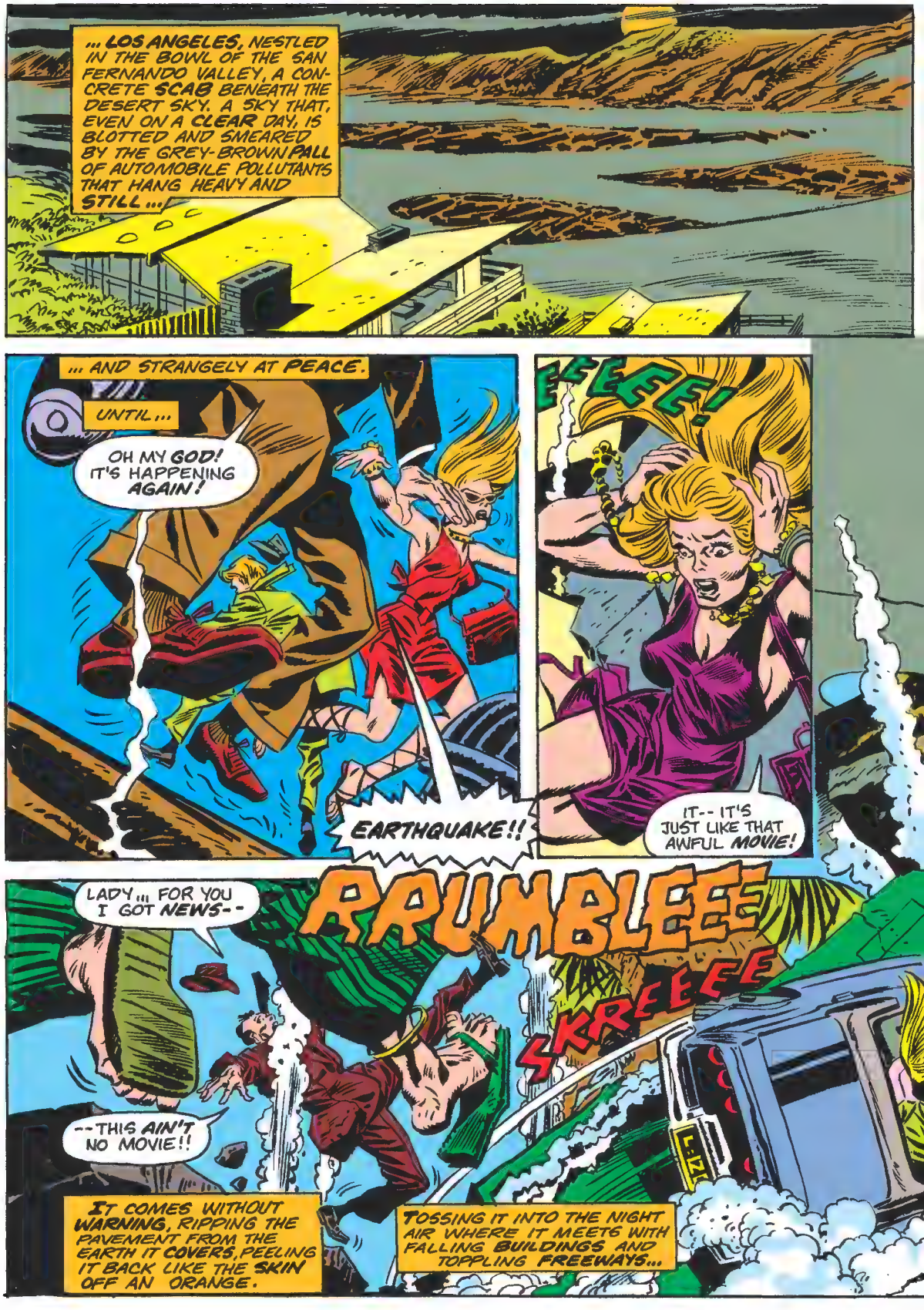
"SHORTLY THEREAFTER, THE SHIP ARRIVED AT ITS DESTINATION, BEARING TWO GRIM ADDITIONS TO ITS MYSTERIOUS CARGO...!
FIRST HUMPHRIES, THEN THE TWO STUDENTS... ALL DEAD! I FEEL STRANGELY FRIGHTENED, YET ON THE OTHER HAND OBSESSED! I ALMOST WISH I'D NEVER FOUND THIS TOMB-- BUT I'M GOING TO SEE THIS THROUGH!
EXCUSE ME, SIR THOMPSON... IT WAS RADIOED AHEAD THAT HUMPHRIES AND HIS STUDENTS DIED UNDER MYSTERIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES! WOULD YOU CARE TO CLARIFY...
AND YOUR TRIP, IT IS RUMORED YOU MADE A FIND OF GREATEST IMPORTANCE...
PLEASE, GENTLEMEN-- NO COMMENT! NOT NOW, ANYWAY...
THAT SHOULD BE THE LAST OF IT... THANK YOU, LADS! BE CAREFUL NOW.
LUCKILY THE MUSEUM LET ME BRING EVERYTHING UP HERE TO SUSSEX... I NEED THE ISOLATION! THE TRANSLATIONS OF THE HIEROGLYPHICS WILL REQUIRE FULL CONCENTRATION AND INFINITE PATIENCE...
THE MORE I WORK WITH THESE SYMBOLS, THE MORE A PATTERN EMERGES. THEY SEEM TO TELL, WARN, UPON ALL THE ARTIFACTS, OF A PHENOMENON LIKE WHAT WE CALL POSSESSION...
...BUT POSSESSION OF WHAT?? THERE SEEMS TO BE AN UNDEFINED THIRD STEP-- HAVEN'T A RUDDY CLUE WHAT IT RELATES TO... EXCEPT IT DOES HINT AT RESURRECTING ANUBIS.

BLAST!
WHY CAN'T I FIT THE PIECES OF THIS PUZZLE TOGETHER?!
TIRED-- CAN'T KEEP MY EYES FOCUSING. MAYBE... DRIVING MYSELF... PRESSING...
...TOO...
...HARRRR...
"SLEEP DESCENDED LIKE DARKNESS, LIKE A GLOVED HAND SMOTHERING... PERHAPS LIKE AN EGYPTIAN NIGHT...
"...FOR IT PROVIDED LITTLE REST AND LESS PEACE!
"SHADOWS LEERED FROM THE CORRIDORS OF NIGHTMARES, IMAGES NOT QUITE MEMORIES, HAUNTING...
MY GOD! WHAT HAPPENED HERE... THE ROOM IS A MESS! ALL MY ARTIFACTS ARE STREWN ABOUT AS IF THEY WERE WORTHLESS JUNK!
BLOOD!!! MY LORD, IT'S ALL OVER ME... AM I GOING MAD?
NO! NOT MAD-- NOTHING SO MERCIFUL AS THAT! I SEE IT ALL NOW... THE PIECES OF MY HIEROGLYPHIC PUZZLE FALL INTO PLACE!
I AM A MAN OF SCIENCE... I MUST EXAMINE THE EVIDENCE CAREFULLY! BUT I'M SCARED... SCARED TO BLOODY HELL!

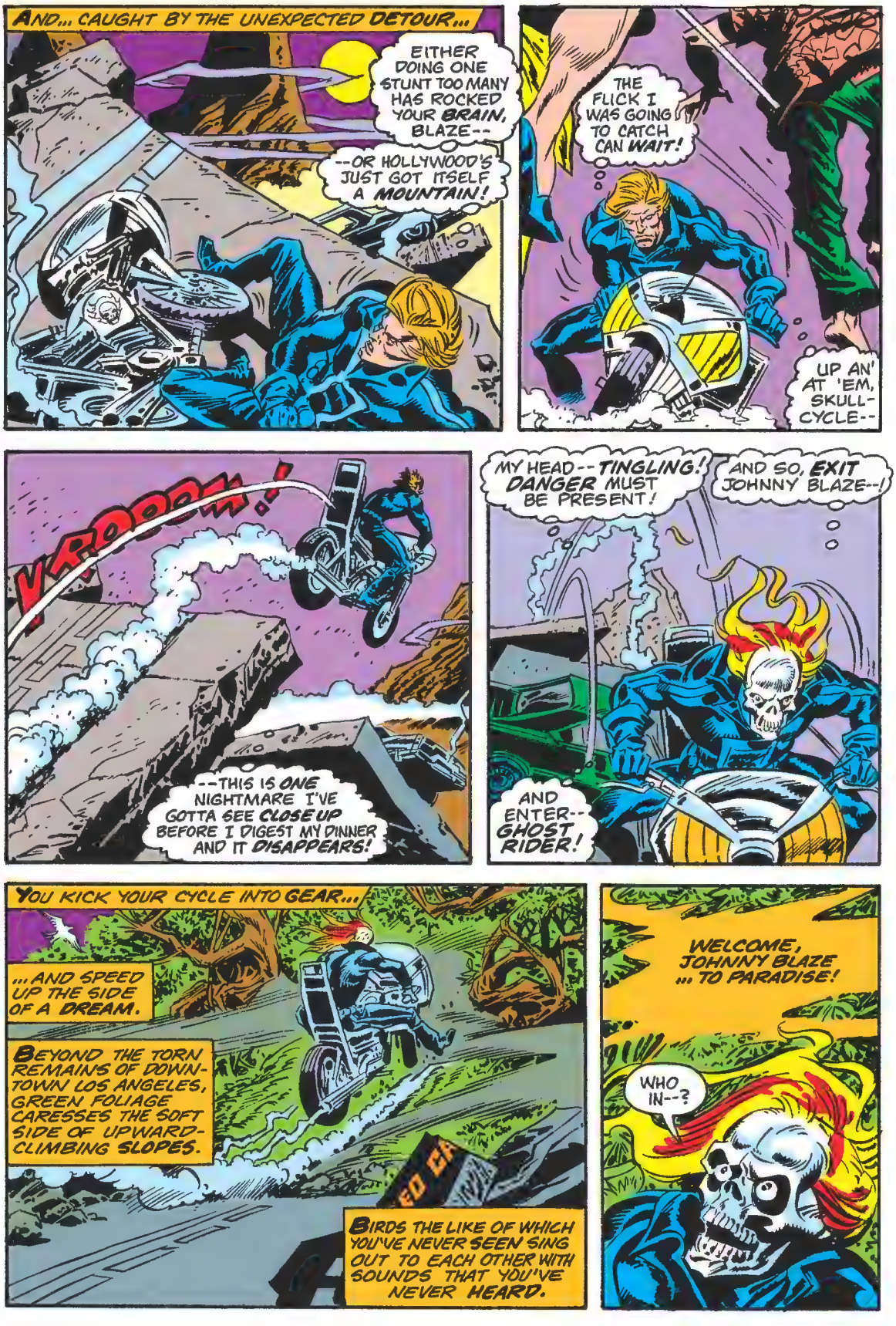
"WITH CONCEPT IN MIND, THE HIEROGLYPHICS SEEMED TO TAKE ON A WHOLE NEW MEANING...THEY SEEMED ALMOST TERRIFYINGLY, TO TRANSLATE THEMSELVES...!
"AND THEN, REALIZATION...
HUMPHRIES...THE OTHERS--I KILLED THEM! I WAS SO BLIND TO IT ALL! I AM POSSESSED BY THE SPIRIT OF ANUBIS!
THIS SCRATCH...THAT'S HOW THE POSSESSION WAS ACHIEVED! AND MORE DEATHS WILL FOLLOW... BUT, NO!
IT MUST STOP HERE!
"I KNEW NOT WHAT THE SUBSTANCES WERE, OTHER THAN INSTINCTUALLY SENSING THEIR COMBINED TOXINS WOULD MORE THAN ACHIEVE THE DESIRED RESULTS...
"KILL THE BODY, KILL THE BEAST...!
"FOOL! POOR, BRAVE, STUPID FOOL...
"YET, ULTIMATELY, WHAT ELSE WAS TO BE DONE? SUCH IS THE FATE OF THE HELPLESS, THE INNOCENTS CAUGHT UP IN SCHEMES THEY CAN KNOW NOTHING ABOUT.
"THE POISON WAS SWIFT... I WAS PLEASED! I HAD TAKEN A SOUL, BUT THE BODY--THE FLESH--MUST BE SURRENDERED...!
"THUS I WAS RESURRECTED--I, THE SPIRIT OF THE MOON, GUARDIAN OF THE WAY, WATCHER OF THE DEAD.
"I, ANUBIS, THE LIVING MAN-GOD, WALKED THE EARTH!"


MARVEL PREMIERE
MARVEL COMICS GROUP™
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
25¢ CC
28
FEB
02142
MARVEL PREMIERE
FEATURING
GHOST RIDER! MAN-THING! MORBIUS! WEREWOLF BY NIGHT!
THE LEGION OF MONSTERS™
THE MOST SPINE-TINGLING TEAM-UP OF ALL!
ACTION !! IN THE MYSTERIOUS MARVEL MANNER!
STAY BACK! EVEN WE DON'T STAND A CHANCE AGAINST... THAT!

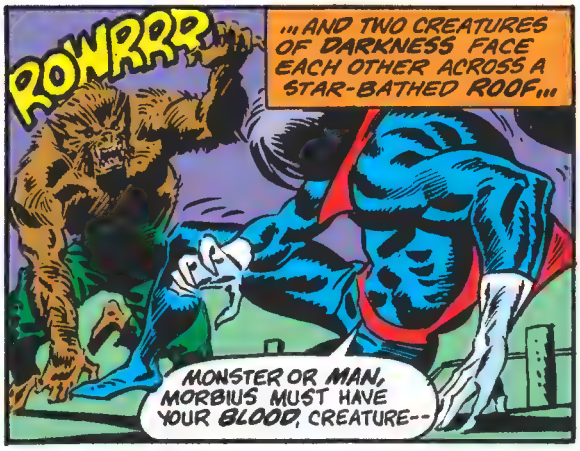
STAN LEE PRESENTS: THE LEGION of MONSTERS!™
ONCE YOU WERE A MAN, A CHEMIST NAMED TED SALLIS, UNTIL A TOP-SECRET EXPERIMENT WENT AWRY... AND YOU CHANGED.
NOW YOU ARE A SHAMBLING, MINDLESS MOCKERY OF YOUR FORMER SELF, A CREATURE OF THE SWAMP-OOZE THAT IS YOUR HOME... YOU ARE THE MAN-THING!
YOU ARE JOHNNY BLAZE, ONCE A SPAWN OF SATAN. NOW YOU ARE FREE OF HIM...
...BUT YOU STILL POSSESS SATAN-SPAWNED SUPER-NATURAL POWERS.
YOU ARE THE GHOST RIDER!
THE FULL MOON PAINTS EERIE SHADOWS ACROSS YOUR CHALK-WHITE FLESH, MICHAEL MORBIUS. ONCE YOU WERE A RENOWNED BIO-CHEMIST DYING OF AN UNKNOWN BLOOD-DISEASE AND SEARCHING FOR A CURE.
YOU FOUND IT.
AND NOW YOU'RE THE LIVING VAMPIRE BECAUSE OF IT!
THE SAME MOON HIGH-LIGHTS FUR AND FROTHING FANGS, AND YOU WHO MEN CALL JACK RUSSELL FIND YOURSELF BAYING AT THE GOLDEN ORB ABOVE YOU.
BAYING OUT YOUR SOUL AT THE GLEAMING CATALYST THAT HAS THE POWER TO CHANGE YOU FROM MAN TO MAN-BEAST...
...THE WEREWOLF BY NIGHT!
AND THIS NIGHT, YOU ALL FOLLOW A COURSE TOWARDS A DESTINY SO STRANGE THAT IT COULD ONLY BEGIN IN...


... LOS ANGELES, NESTLED IN THE BOWL OF THE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY, A CONCRETE SCAB BENEATH THE DESERT SKY. A SKY THAT, EVEN ON A CLEAR DAY, IS BLOTTED AND SMEARED BY THE GREY-BROWN PALL OF AUTOMOBILE POLLUTANTS THAT HANG HEAVY AND STILL ...
... AND STRANGELY AT PEACE.
UNTIL ...
OH MY GOD! IT'S HAPPENING AGAIN!
EARTHQUAKE!!
EEEEE!
IT-- IT'S JUST LIKE THAT AWFUL MOVIE!
RUMBLEEE
KREEEE
LADY ... FOR YOU I GOT NEWS--
--THIS AIN'T NO MOVIE!!
IT COMES WITHOUT WARNING, RIPPING THE PAVEMENT FROM THE EARTH IT COVERS, PEELING IT BACK LIKE THE SKIN OFF AN ORANGE.
TOSSING IT INTO THE NIGHT AIR WHERE IT MEETS WITH FALLING BUILDINGS AND TOPPLING FREEWAYS...

BILL MANTLO • FRANK ROBBINS
WRITER ARTIST
STEVE GAN • INKER
KAREN MANTLO • LETTERER
JANICE COHEN • COLORIST
MARV WOLFMAN
VIZIER & EDITOR
MESA
SUNSET
BLVD.
...AND, THRU THE HAZE THAT IS THIS CITY'S SKY, APPEARS A VISION OF UNHOLY TERROR AS HURT AND FRIGHTENED PEOPLE STARE, UNABLE TO BELIEVE THE MESSAGE TRANSMITTED BY THEIR SENSES... UNABLE TO ACCEPT THAT...
SLOW
THERE'S A MOUNTAIN ON SUNSET BOULEVARD!

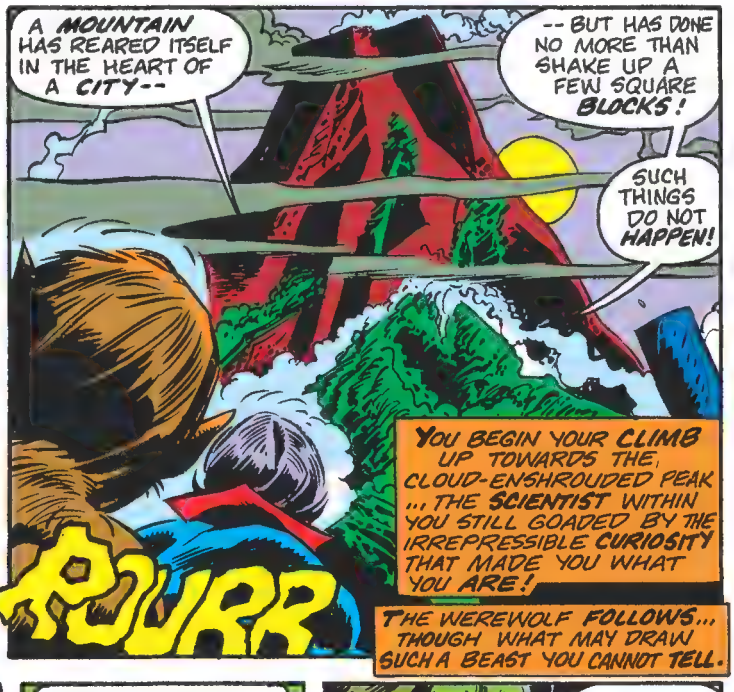

AND... CAUGHT BY THE UNEXPECTED DETOUR...
EITHER DOING ONE STUNT TOO MANY HAS ROCKED YOUR BRAIN, BLAZE--
--OR HOLLYWOOD'S JUST GOT ITSELF A MOUNTAIN!
THE FLICK I WAS GOING TO CATCH CAN WAIT!
UP AN' AT 'EM, SKULL-CYCLE--
VROOOM!!
--THIS IS ONE NIGHTMARE I'VE GOTTA SEE CLOSE UP BEFORE I DIGEST MY DINNER AND IT DISAPPEARS!
MY HEAD--TINGLING! DANGER MUST BE PRESENT!
AND SO, EXIT JOHNNY BLAZE--!
AND ENTER--GHOST RIDER!
YOU KICK YOUR CYCLE INTO GEAR...
...AND SPEED UP THE SIDE OF A DREAM.
BEYOND THE TORN REMAINS OF DOWN-TOWN LOS ANGELES, GREEN FOLIAGE CARESSES THE SOFT SIDE OF UPWARD-CLIMBING SLOPES.
BIRDS THE LIKE OF WHICH YOU'VE NEVER SEEN SING OUT TO EACH OTHER WITH SOUNDS THAT YOU'VE NEVER HEARD.
WELCOME, JOHNNY BLAZE ... TO PARADISE!
WHO IN--?

YOU HAVE FLOWN FOR MANY NIGHTS, MICHAEL MORBIUS... TRYING TO OUTFLY YOUR MEMORIES.
MARTINE... BOSTON... SIMON STROUD... ALL HAUNT THE PERIPHERY OF YOUR CONSCIOUSNESS WITH REMEMBRANCES...*
...BUT ALL ARE LOST AS THE RUSH OF THE BLOOD-HUNGER SCREAMS THROUGH YOUR AGONIZED MIND, UNTIL YOU SEE...
AT LAST! THAT SHADOWED FORM ON THE ROOFTOP!
HE WILL SATIATE THE LUST THAT CLAWS AT ME!
*SEE FEAR #31--MARV
HIS WILL BE THE BLOOD THAT EASES THE TORMENT IN MY SOUL!
HIS WILL BE THE DEATH THIS NIGHT SO THAT I MAY GO ON LIVING!
LIVING THE LIFE OF A VAMPIRE--THE CURSE OF A LIVING DEATH!
I THIRST!!
RAHRRR
BUT IT IS NOT PRECISELY A MAN THAT TURNS ITS SNARLING VISAGE UP TO THE NIGHT...
LORD, MAN! YOU'RE THE--
--WEREWOLF!!*
ARRRR
KREEE
TALONS RAKE MOON-WHITE FLESH...
*MORB AND WOLFIE MET ONCE BEFORE IN G.S. WEREWOLF #4, REMEMBER?--MARV.


ROWRRR
...AND TWO CREATURES OF DARKNESS FACE EACH OTHER ACROSS A STAR-BATHED ROOF...
MONSTER OR MAN, MORBIUS MUST HAVE YOUR BLOOD, CREATURE--

BUT SUDDENLY...
TREMORS! OF COURSE! I'M IN LOS ANGELES!

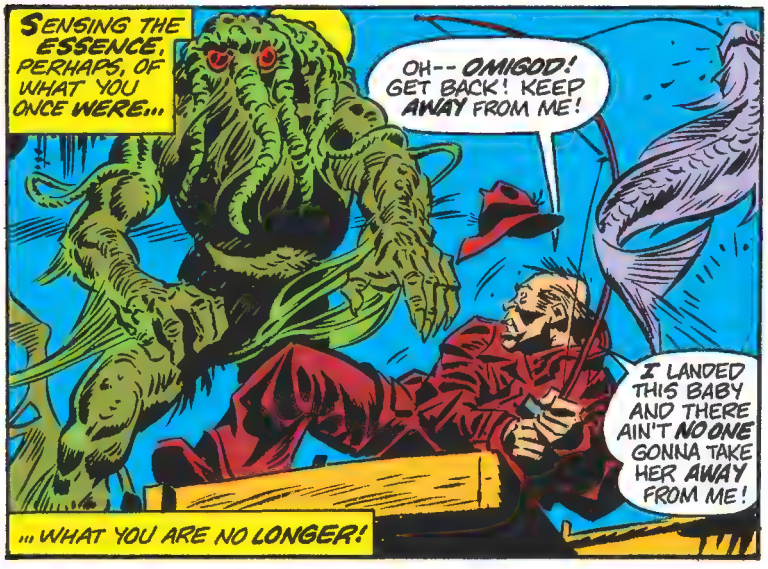
THEY'VE SUBSIDED! BUT HOW-- NO EARTHQUAKE ENDS SO ABRUPTLY!
AND THE CAUSE OF IT STANDS BEFORE ME! YET IT IS IMPOSSIBLE!


A MOUNTAIN HAS REARED ITSELF IN THE HEART OF A CITY--
-- BUT HAS DONE NO MORE THAN SHAKE UP A FEW SQUARE BLOCKS!
SUCH THINGS DO NOT HAPPEN!
POUR
YOU BEGIN YOUR CLIMB UP TOWARDS THE, CLOUD-ENSHROUDED PEAK ... THE SCIENTIST WITHIN YOU STILL GOADED BY THE IRREPRESSIBLE CURIOSITY THAT MADE YOU WHAT YOU ARE!
THE WEREWOLF FOLLOWS... THOUGH WHAT MAY DRAW SUCH A BEAST YOU CANNOT TELL.

THERE IS LIFE AMONGST THE STAGNATION OF THE SWAMPS THIS NIGHT. LIFE UNHEEDFUL OF OTHER LIFE. LIFE SHUT OFF FROM LIFE.
HUMAN LIFE.
GONNA CATCH ME A BIG ONE!

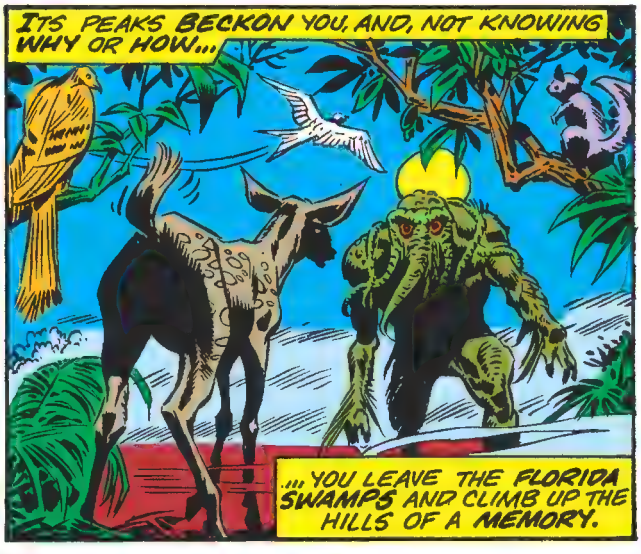
GONNA BREAK A RECORD! MAKE THOSE GUYS BACK AT THE B & O BAR CHOKE ON THEIR BEERS! GONNA--
HEY! A STRIKE!

FEEL HER PULL!! THAT HOOK MUST BE TEARIN' HER LIP OFF!
YOU DRAW CLOSE TO IT, LIKE A MOTH TO A FLAME.


SENSING THE ESSENCE, PERHAPS, OF WHAT YOU ONCE WERE...
OH-- OMIGOD! GET BACK! KEEP AWAY FROM ME!
I LANDED THIS BABY AND THERE AIN'T NO ONE GONNA TAKE HER AWAY FROM ME!
... WHAT YOU ARE NO LONGER!

NOT EVEN A WALKIN' HUNK O' SWAMP!
YOU ARE AMAZED. HE KNEW YOU FOR WHAT YOU ARE...
... ONLY THERE WAS NO FEAR IN HIM! HIS PETTY CONCERNS HAD TAKEN OVER HIS MIND TO THE POINT WHERE YOU WERE JUST A MOMENTARY ANNOYANCE... A DISTURBANCE IN HIS MORE IMPORTANT RITUAL OF FISHING.

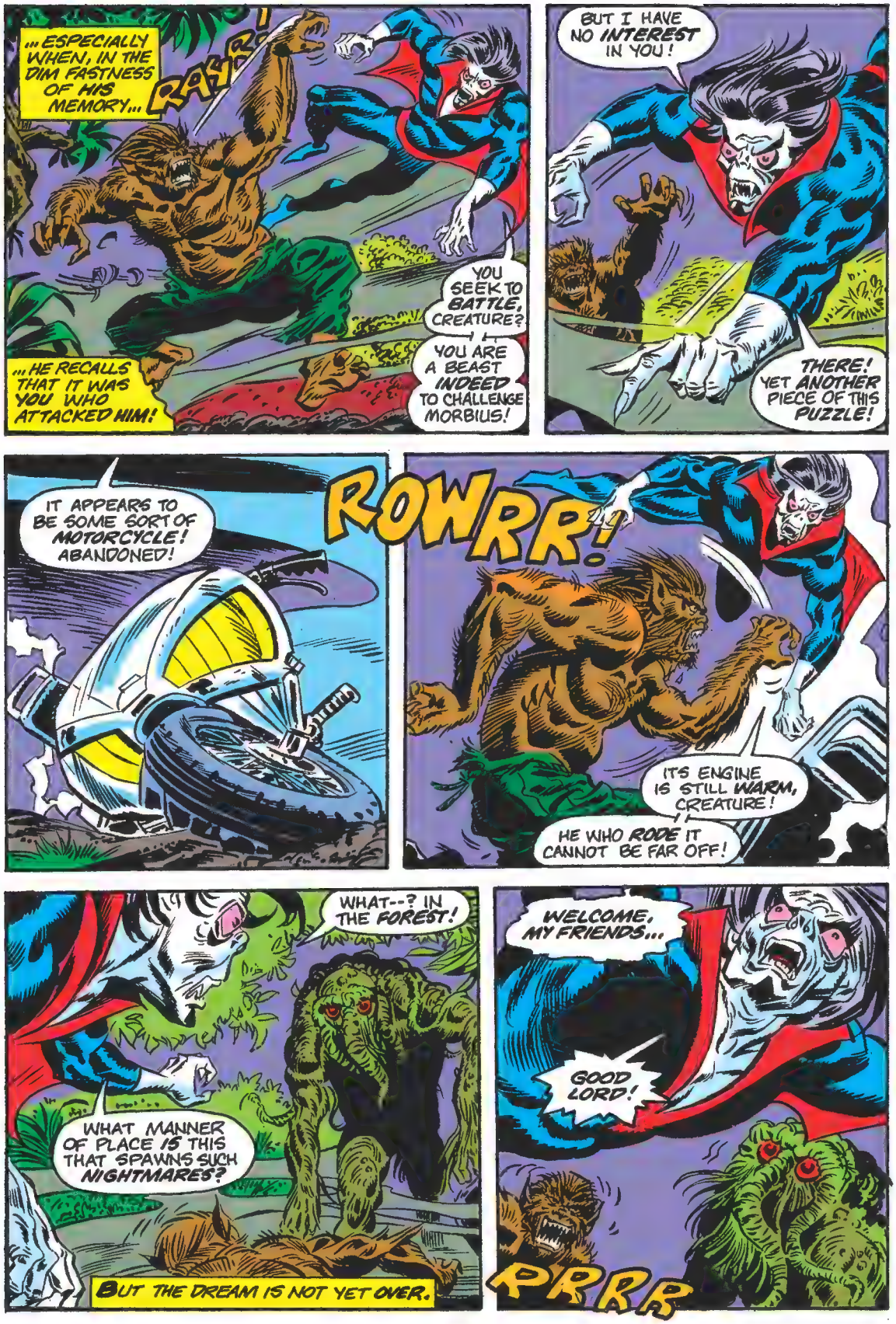
THE AIR SHIMMERS ABOUT THE MUCK THAT IS YOUR BODY.
YOU TURN TO FACE THE MOUNTAIN THAT WAS NOT THERE A MOMENT BEFORE.


ITS PEAKS BECKON YOU, AND, NOT KNOWING WHY OR HOW...
... YOU LEAVE THE FLORIDA SWAMPS AND CLIMB UP THE HILLS OF A MEMORY.

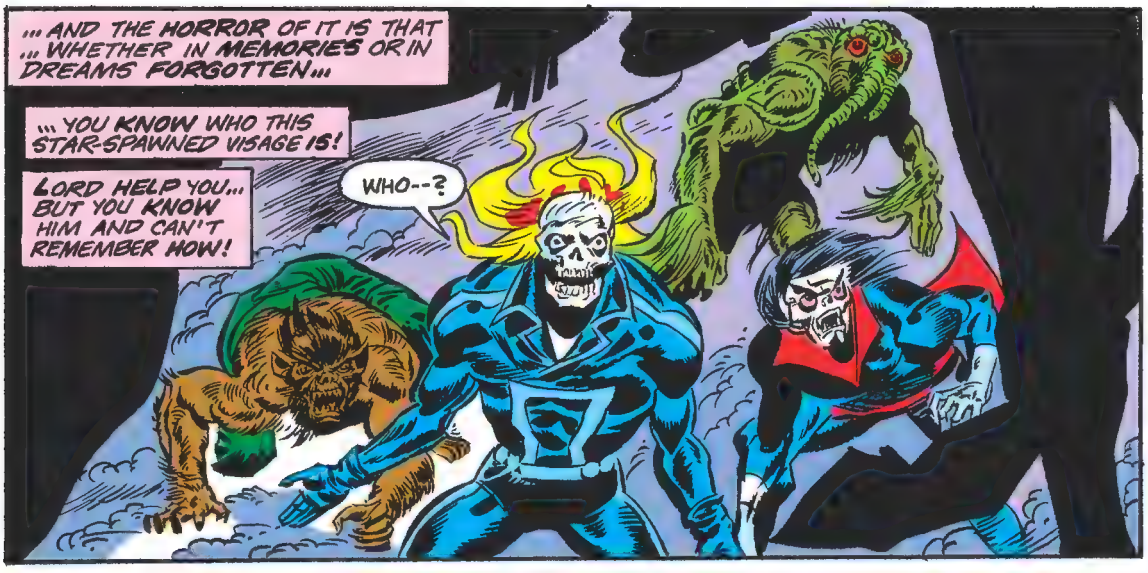
A MEMORY SHARED BY OTHERS.
WONDER HEAPS ITSELF UPON WONDER!
I HAVE NEVER SEEN SUCH FLORA! SUCH FAUNA! ALL ARE FAMILIAR-- YET STRANGELY... CHANGED!

I MUST EXPLORE FURTHER!
FAREWELL, CREATURE! MORBIUS WILL NOT DRAIN YOU THIS NIGHT!

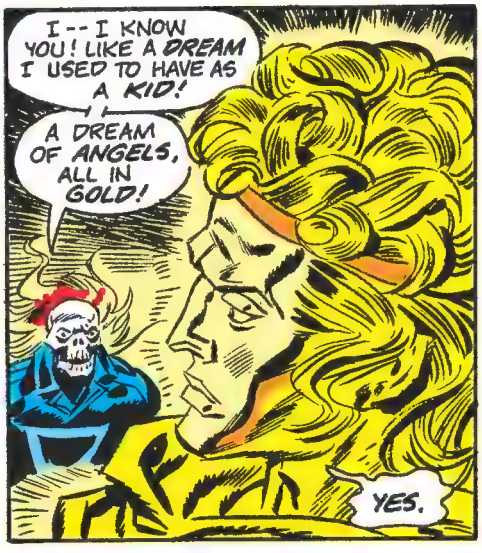
ROARR!
BUT THE WEREWOLF IS NOT SO EASILY FORGOTTEN...

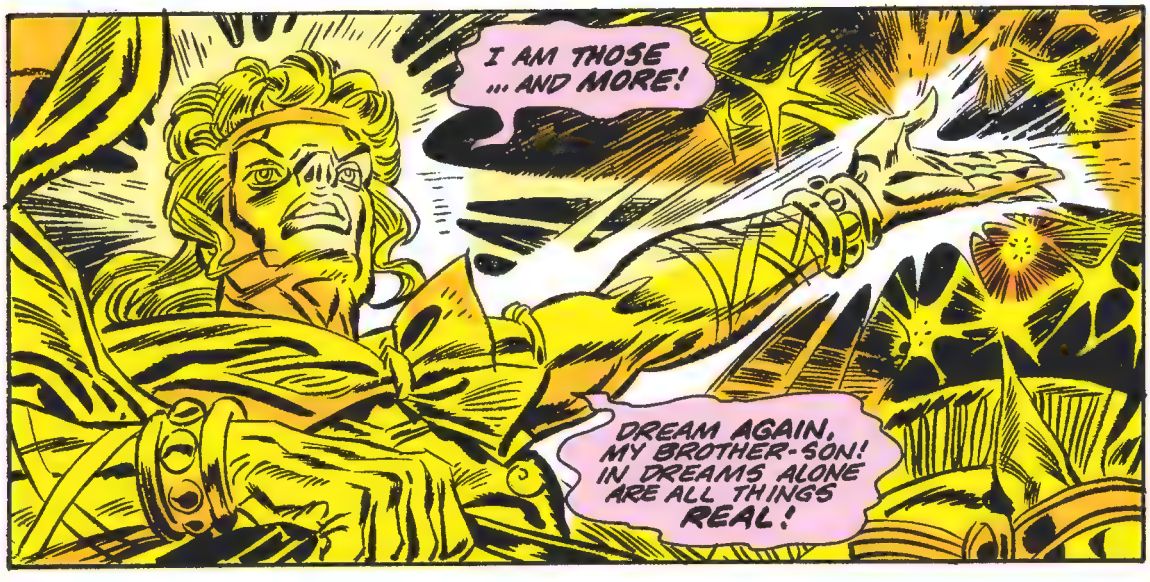

...ESPECIALLY WHEN, IN THE DIM FASTNESS OF HIS MEMORY...
...HE RECALLS THAT IT WAS YOU WHO ATTACKED HIM!
YOU SEEK TO BATTLE, CREATURE?
YOU ARE A BEAST INDEED TO CHALLENGE MORBIUS!
BUT I HAVE NO INTEREST IN YOU!
THERE! YET ANOTHER PIECE OF THIS PUZZLE!
IT APPEARS TO BE SOME SORT OF MOTORCYCLE! ABANDONED!
ROWRR!
ITS ENGINE IS STILL WARM, CREATURE!
HE WHO RODE IT CANNOT BE FAR OFF!
WHAT--? IN THE FOREST!
WHAT MANNER OF PLACE IS THIS THAT SPAWNS SUCH NIGHTMARES?
BUT THE DREAM IS NOT YET OVER.
WELCOME, MY FRIENDS...
GOOD LORD!
PRRR

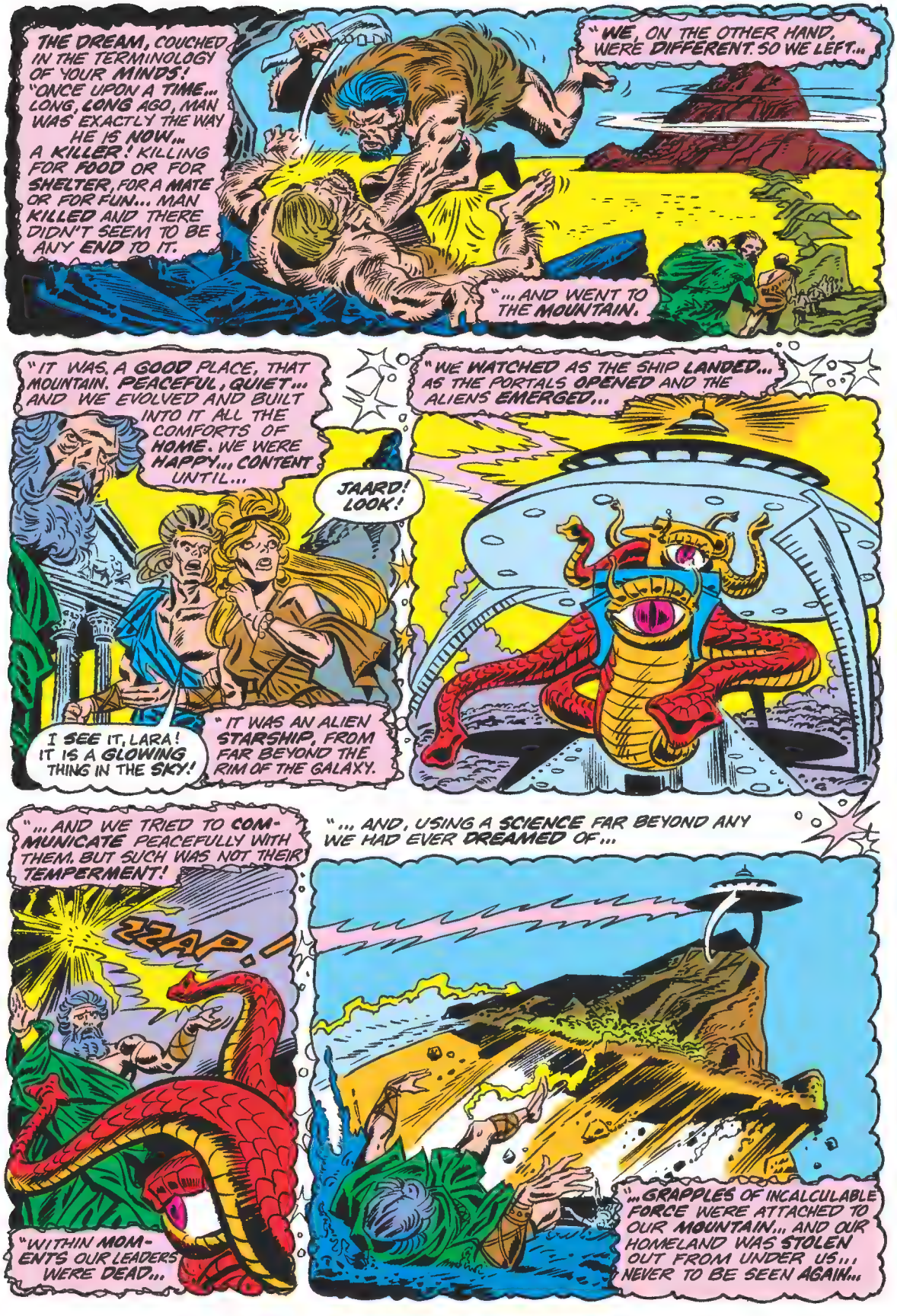
...I AM HE WHO IS CALLED THE STARSEED!
I BID YOU WELCOME!
THE ROARING SILENT SCREAM OF INTER-STELLAR SPACE RUSHES THROUGH THE SENSES OF THESE ONCE-MEN ... SENSES ROOTED FIRMLY TO THE EARTH.
THE GLOW OF A LIFETIME OF SUNS BLAZES ABOUT THE GLEAMING FIGURE AND HIS REARING, GOLDEN MOUNT.
YOU STARE.. YOU FOUR WHO CLAIM HUMANITY... AT THIS VISION OF UTTER ALIEN-NESS...

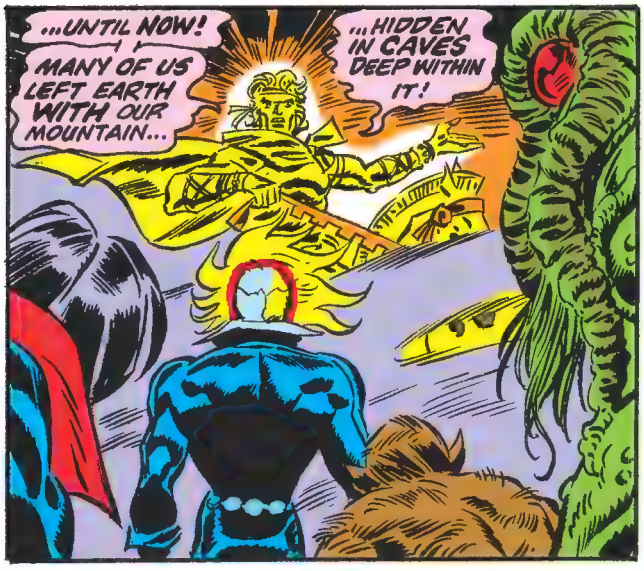

... AND THE HORROR OF IT IS THAT ... WHETHER IN MEMORIES OR IN DREAMS FORGOTTEN...
... YOU KNOW WHO THIS STAR-SPAWNED VISAGE IS!
LORD HELP YOU... BUT YOU KNOW HIM AND CAN'T REMEMBER HOW!
WHO--?

HAVE I NOT SAID IT, MY BROTHERS?
I AM HE WHO WAS LOST AND IS FOUND!
I AM THE STARSEED!


I -- I KNOW YOU! LIKE A DREAM I USED TO HAVE AS A KID!
A DREAM OF ANGELS, ALL IN GOLD!
YES.


I AM THOSE ... AND MORE!
DREAM AGAIN, MY BROTHER-SON! IN DREAMS ALONE ARE ALL THINGS REAL!


THE DREAM, COUCHED IN THE TERMINOLOGY OF YOUR MINDS! "ONCE UPON A TIME... LONG, LONG AGO, MAN WAS EXACTLY THE WAY HE IS NOW... A KILLER! KILLING FOR FOOD OR FOR SHELTER, FOR A MATE OR FOR FUN... MAN KILLED AND THERE DIDN'T SEEM TO BE ANY END TO IT.
"WE, ON THE OTHER HAND, WERE DIFFERENT. SO WE LEFT...
"... AND WENT TO THE MOUNTAIN.
"IT WAS A GOOD PLACE, THAT MOUNTAIN. PEACEFUL, QUIET... AND WE EVOLVED AND BUILT INTO IT ALL THE COMFORTS OF HOME. WE WERE HAPPY... CONTENT UNTIL...
JAARD! LOOK!
I SEE IT, LARA! IT IS A GLOWING THING IN THE SKY!
"IT WAS AN ALIEN STARSHIP, FROM FAR BEYOND THE RIM OF THE GALAXY.
"WE WATCHED AS THE SHIP LANDED... AS THE PORTALS OPENED AND THE ALIENS EMERGED...
"... AND WE TRIED TO COMMUNICATE PEACEFULLY WITH THEM. BUT SUCH WAS NOT THEIR TEMPERMENT!
ZZAP!
"WITHIN MOMENTS OUR LEADERS WERE DEAD...
"... AND, USING A SCIENCE FAR BEYOND ANY WE HAD EVER DREAMED OF...
"... GRAPPLES OF INCALCULABLE FORCE WERE ATTACHED TO OUR MOUNTAIN... AND OUR HOMELAND WAS STOLEN OUT FROM UNDER US... NEVER TO BE SEEN AGAIN...

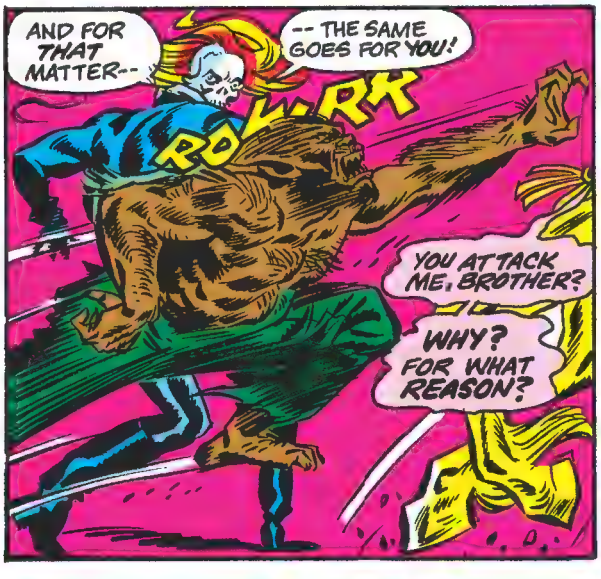

...UNTIL NOW!
MANY OF US LEFT EARTH WITH OUR MOUNTAIN...
...HIDDEN IN CAVES DEEP WITHIN IT!

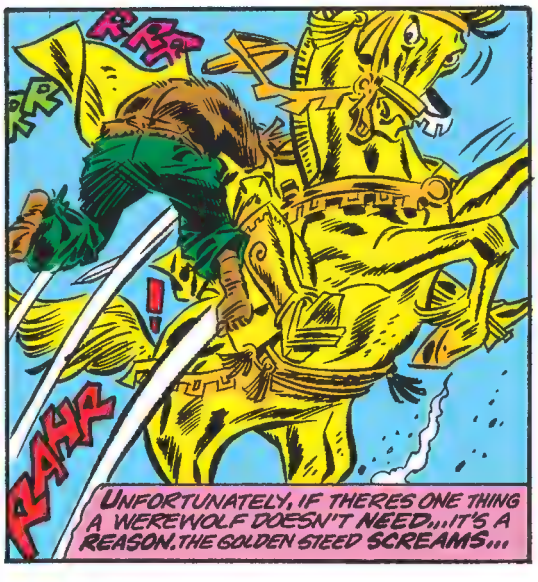
"WE WAITED AND, IN TIME, OVERCAME THE ALIENS, AND UTILIZING THEIR OWN FAR-ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY...
"...WE REGAINED OUR WORLD AND TURNED IT BACK THROUGH THE AEONS OF INTER-DIMENSIONAL SPACE THAT IT HAD TRAVELED..

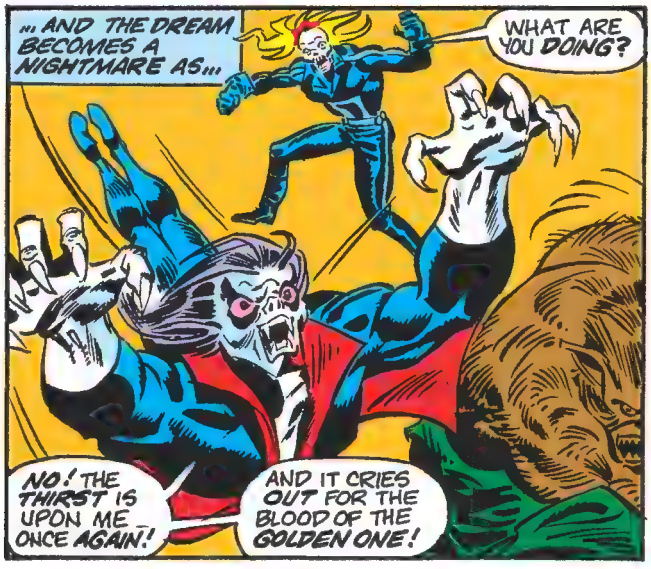
...BACK TO THE HERE AND THE NOW! I AM THE ONLY ONE LEFT OF ALL MY PEOPLE... AND NOW I AM HOME!

THAT'S JUST PEACHY, FRIEND-- EXCEPT FOR ONE SLIGHT MUDDLE!
YOU PARKED YOUR MOUNTAIN RIGHT SMACK DAB IN THE MIDDLE OF LOS ANGELES, WHICH, WHILE IT AIN'T MUCH TO GO ON ABOUT, IS STILL HOME TO A HECKUVA LOT OF PEOPLE!
I MERELY RETURNED TO THE PLACE WE OCCUPIED MILLIONS OF CENTURIES AGO, BROTHER.

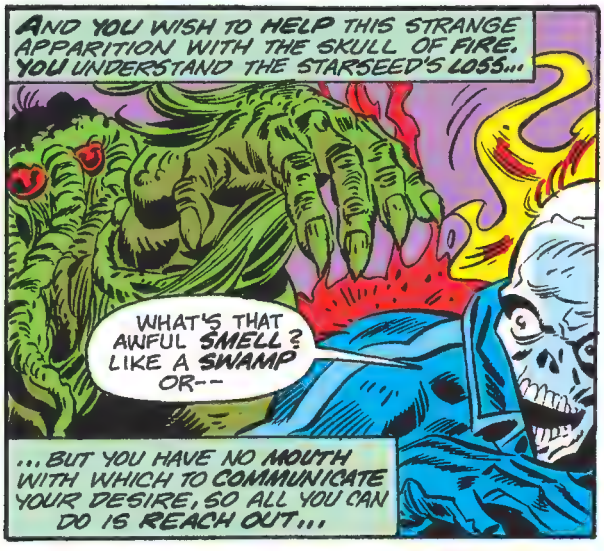
THAT PLACE IS GONE! AGES AGO!
THE EARTH HAS CHANGED SINCE THEN! CONTINENTS HAVE SHIFTED FROM YOUR TIME!
HUH? WHO THE HECK ARE YOU??


AND FOR THAT MATTER--
-- THE SAME GOES FOR YOU!
ROWRK
YOU ATTACK ME, BROTHER?
WHY? FOR WHAT REASON?


RRR
RRR
RAHR
UNFORTUNATELY, IF THERES ONE THING A WEREWOLF DOESN'T NEED...IT'S A REASON. THE GOLDEN STEED SCREAMS...

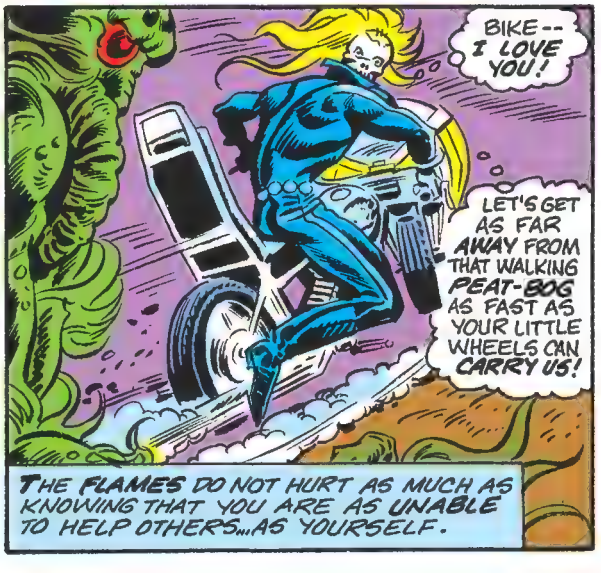

...AND THE DREAM BECOMES A NIGHTMARE AS...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
NO! THE THIRST IS UPON ME ONCE AGAIN!
AND IT CRIES OUT FOR THE BLOOD OF THE GOLDEN ONE!

I CAN'T TELL IF IT'S ME THAT'S NUTS--
--OR EVERY-THING ELSE AROUND HERE!
BUT STARSEED DIDN'T MEAN ANY HARM!
SO CRAZY OR NOT, I'M GONNA HELP HIM!

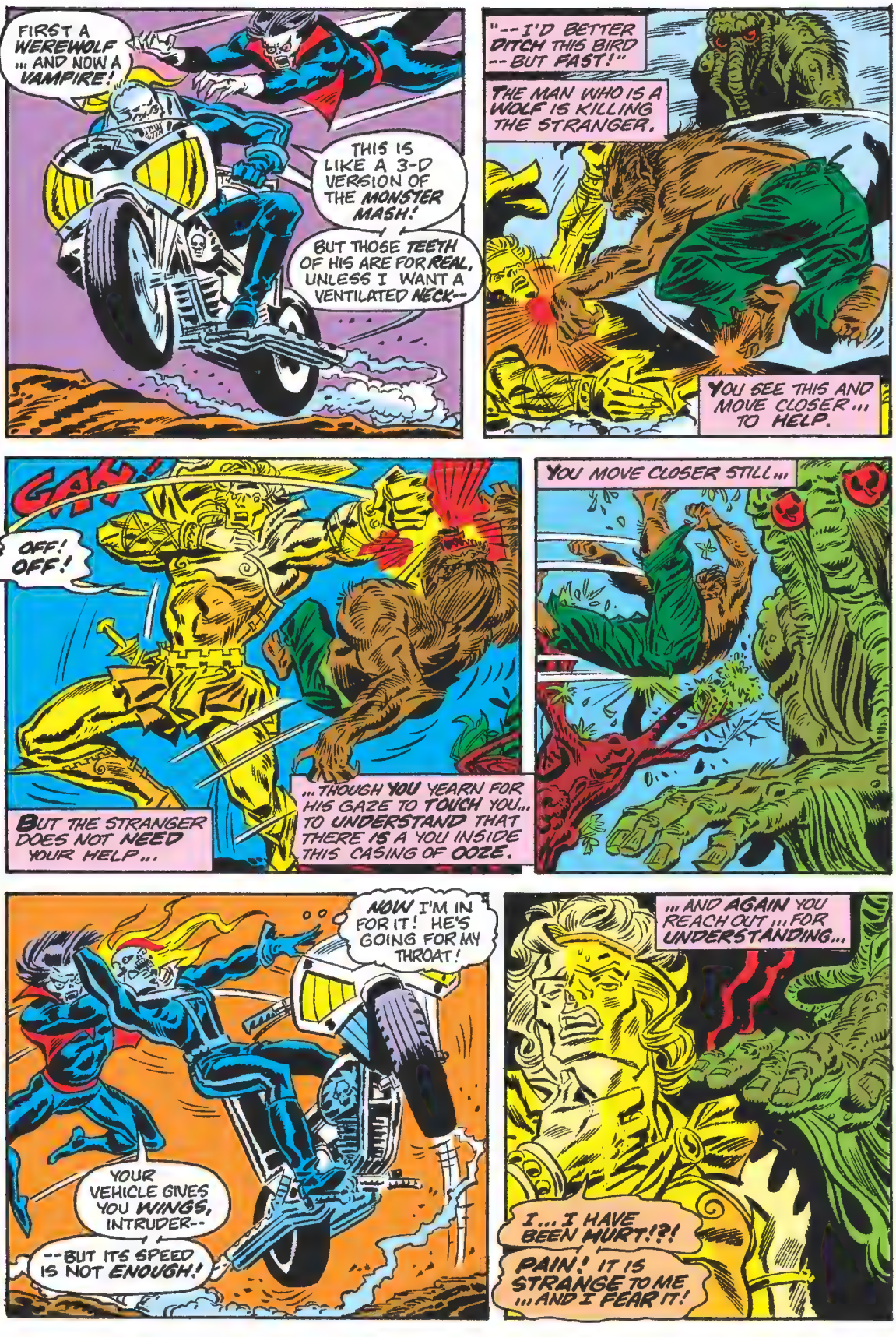

AND YOU WISH TO HELP THIS STRANGE APPARITION WITH THE SKULL OF FIRE. YOU UNDERSTAND THE STARSEED'S LOSS...
WHAT'S THAT AWFUL SMELL? LIKE A SWAMP OR--
...BUT YOU HAVE NO MOUTH WITH WHICH TO COMMUNICATE YOUR DESIRE, SO ALL YOU CAN DO IS REACH OUT...

--EEYOWW! ANOTHER ONE!
GET BACK OR I'LL--
FOR CRYING OUT LOUD! EVEN MY HELLFIRE DOESN'T STOP IT!
...FORGETTING WHAT YOU LOOK LIKE TO OTHERS. FORGETTING THAT YOU ARE...

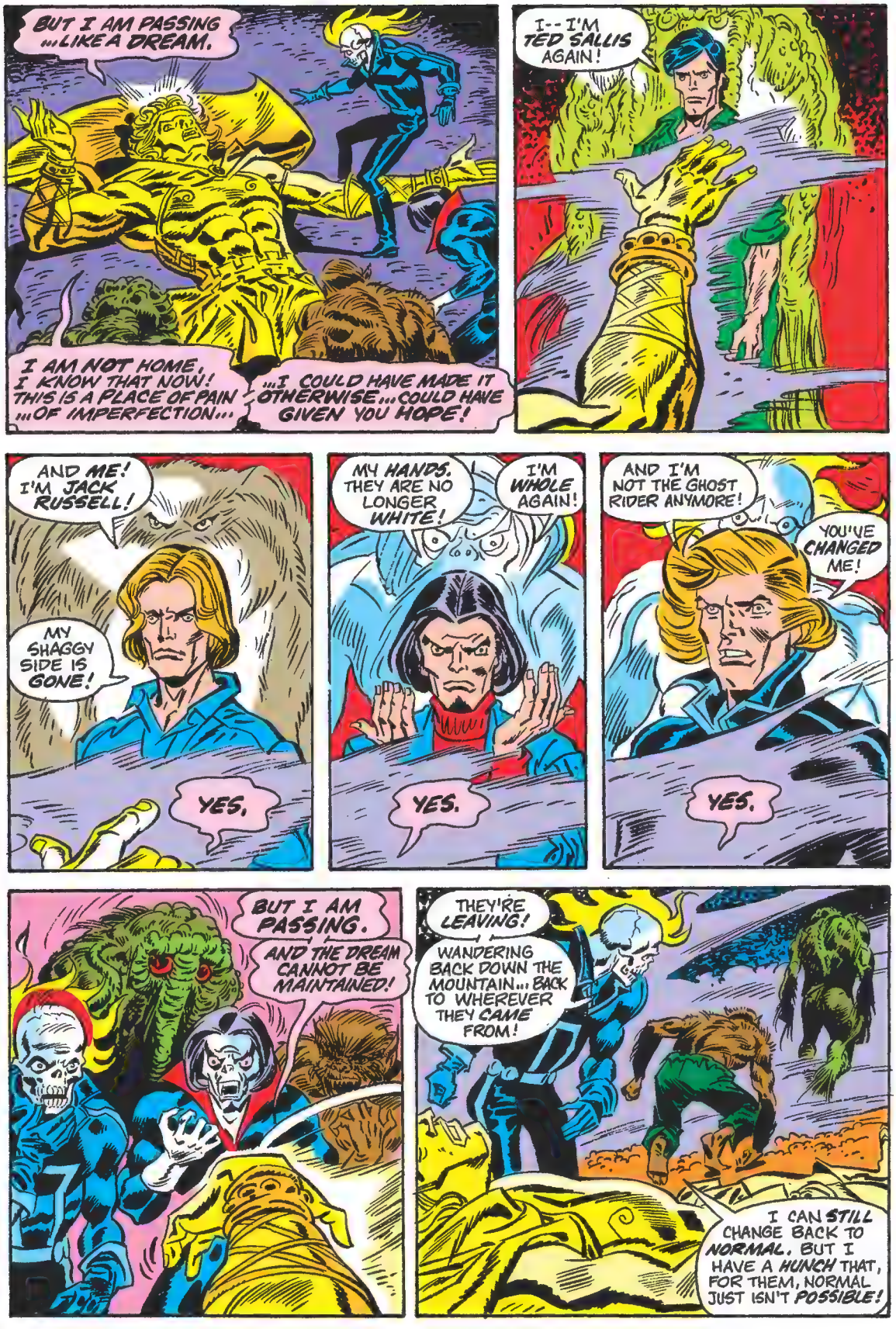
...THE MAN-THING...
TRIPPING OVER SOMETHING! FALLING!
THE SKULL-CYCLE!
...AND THAT IS NOT AN EASY THING TO FORGET.

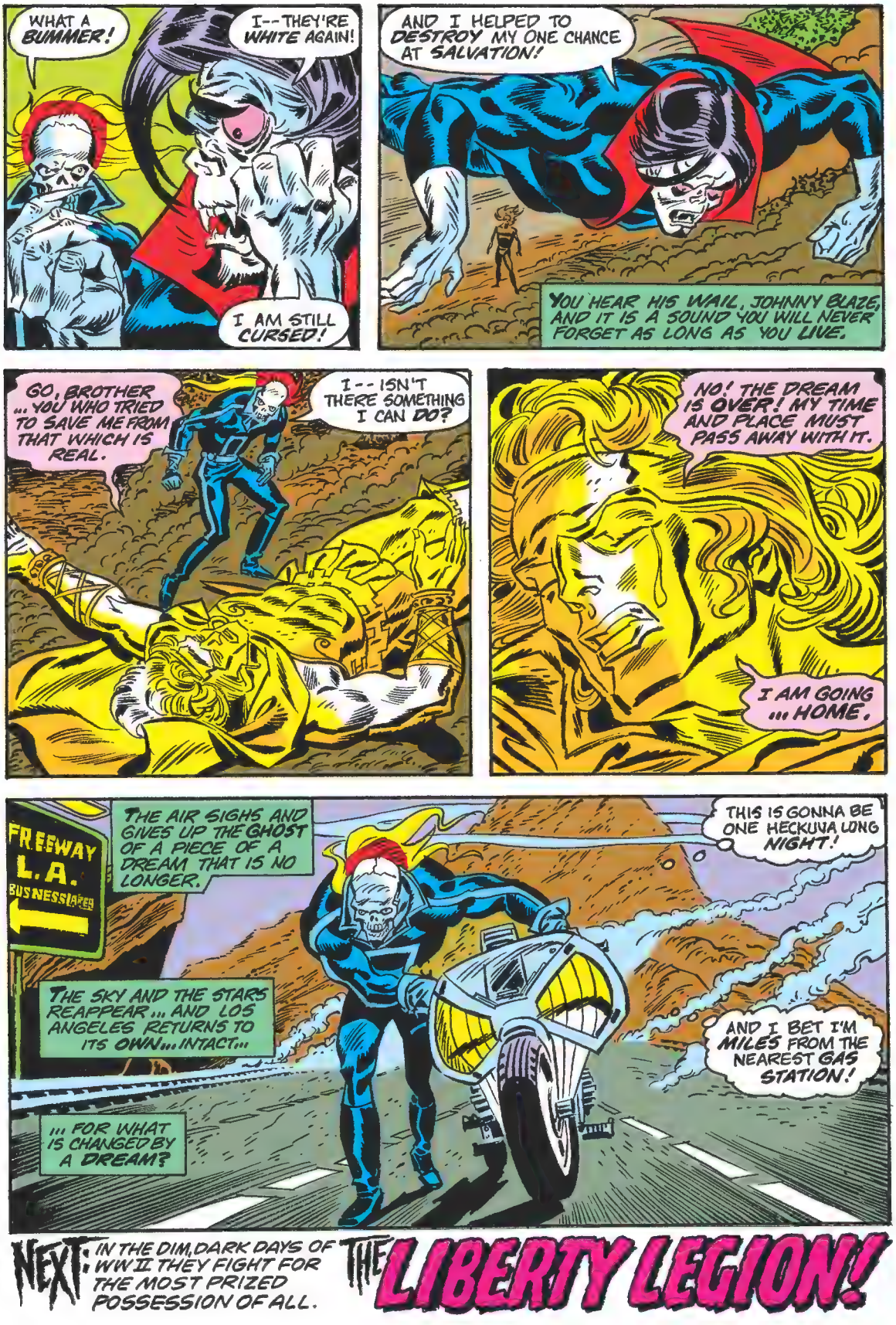

BIKE-- I LOVE YOU!
LET'S GET AS FAR AWAY FROM THAT WALKING PEAT-BOG AS FAST AS YOUR LITTLE WHEELS CAN CARRY US!
THE FLAMES DO NOT HURT AS MUCH AS KNOWING THAT YOU ARE AS UNABLE TO HELP OTHERS...AS YOURSELF.

STARSEED'S DOWN!
THAT REFUGEE FROM A LON CHANEY FILM HAS UNHORSED HIM!
AND THEY'RE FALLING RIGHT INTO MY PATH!
MADE IT! VEERED OFF JUST IN TIME TO AVOID HITTING THEM BOTH!
SCREEEE
WHY, BROTHER? ARE YOU MAD?
WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?
BECAUSE WE ARE CURSED, GOLDEN ONE! CURSED TO WALK THE EARTH AS FREAKS AND MONSTERS!
WHILE YOU, IN YOUR ABSENCE FROM HUMANITY, HAVE MANAGED TO ATTAIN PERFECTION!
FOR REMINDING US OF WHAT WE MIGHT HAVE BEEN... YOU WILL DIE BENEATH OUR FANGS!
NO, BLAST YOU! NO!!
LEAVE HIM ALONE!
YARGH..
THE FLAMES SEAR ME!
THE GOLDEN ONE CAN WAIT, INTRUDER!
UNTIL I'VE SAMPLED THE BLOOD WITHIN YOUR VEINS!


FIRST A WEREWOLF ... AND NOW A VAMPIRE!
THIS IS LIKE A 3-D VERSION OF THE MONSTER MASH!
BUT THOSE TEETH OF HIS ARE FOR REAL, UNLESS I WANT A VENTILATED NECK--
"--I'D BETTER DITCH THIS BIRD --BUT FAST!"
THE MAN WHO IS A WOLF IS KILLING THE STRANGER.
YOU SEE THIS AND MOVE CLOSER ... TO HELP.
GAH!
OFF! OFF!
BUT THE STRANGER DOES NOT NEED YOUR HELP...
...THOUGH YOU YEARN FOR HIS GAZE TO TOUCH YOU... TO UNDERSTAND THAT THERE IS A YOU INSIDE THIS CASING OF OOZE.
YOU MOVE CLOSER STILL...
NOW I'M IN FOR IT! HE'S GOING FOR MY THROAT!
YOUR VEHICLE GIVES YOU WINGS, INTRUDER--
--BUT ITS SPEED IS NOT ENOUGH!
...AND AGAIN YOU REACH OUT ... FOR UNDERSTANDING...
I... I HAVE BEEN HURT!?!
PAIN! IT IS STRANGE TO ME ... AND I FEAR IT!

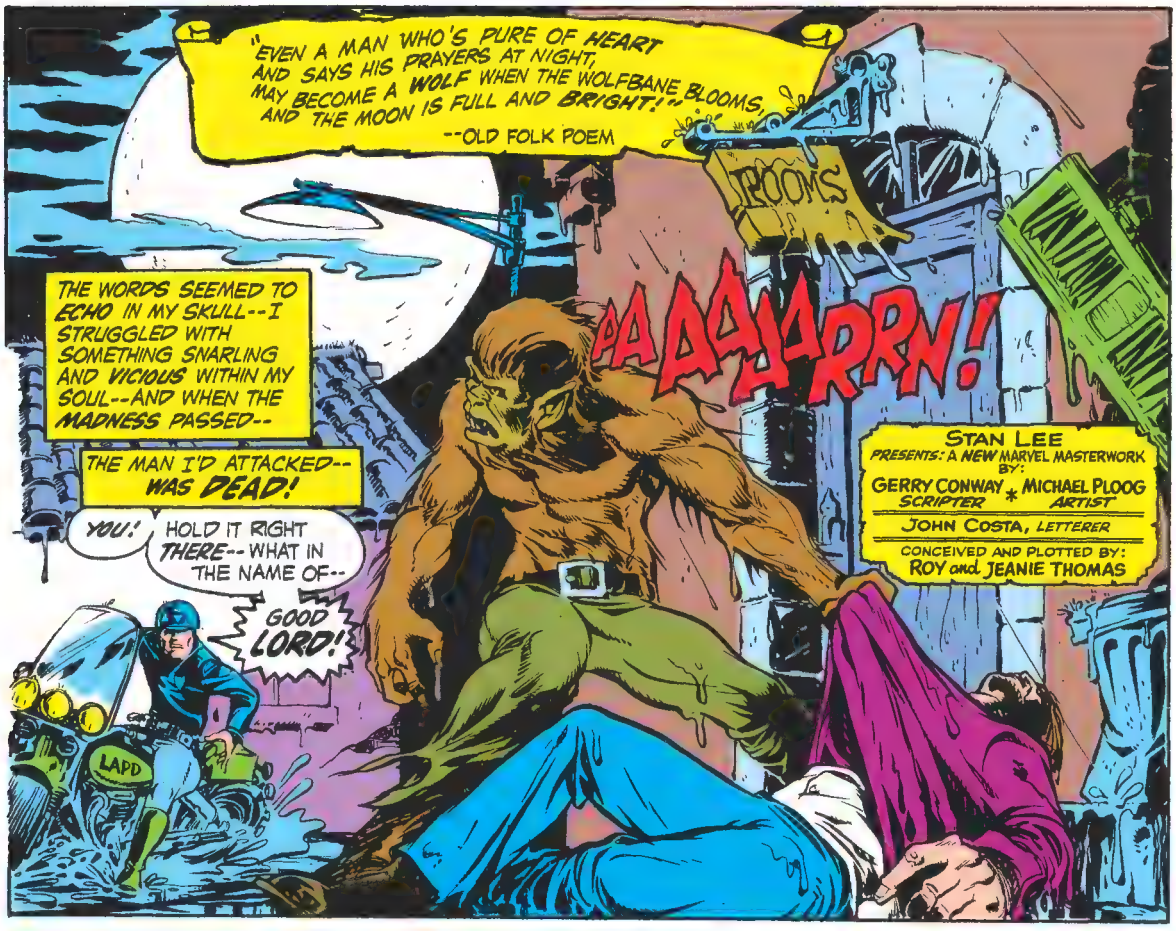
YAGGH!!
THAT SCREAM--!
LIKE SOMEONE'S JUST LOST HIS SOUL!
...BUT AS YOU EXTEND YOUR HAND, THE GOLDEN BEING GRASPS THE CONCEPT OF FEAR FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS ENTIRE EXISTENCE...
...AND WHOEVER KNOWS FEAR BURNS AT THE MAN-THING'S TOUCH!
NO!!
GET OFF OF ME, YOU HALF-BAKED DRACULA!
I DON'T KNOW WHETHER YOU CAN BE KILLED OR NOT!
I MEAN, HOW DO YOU MURDER A SWAMP?
BUT IF YOU'VE HURT HIM, MONSTER, I'LL FIND A WAY TO GET YOU!
I SWEAR IT!
RAHR!
NOW THE WEREWOLF IS GOING FOR HIM!
MUST FIGURE THAT HE'S A FREE MEAL SINCE HE ISN'T MOVING!
BUT YOU'RE NOT GONNA GET HIM, FURRY!
SO BACK-OFF--BEFORE I FRY YOUR UGLY HIDE!
THAT OUGHTA HOLD THEM FOR -- HEY!
YOU'RE ALIVE!
YES.

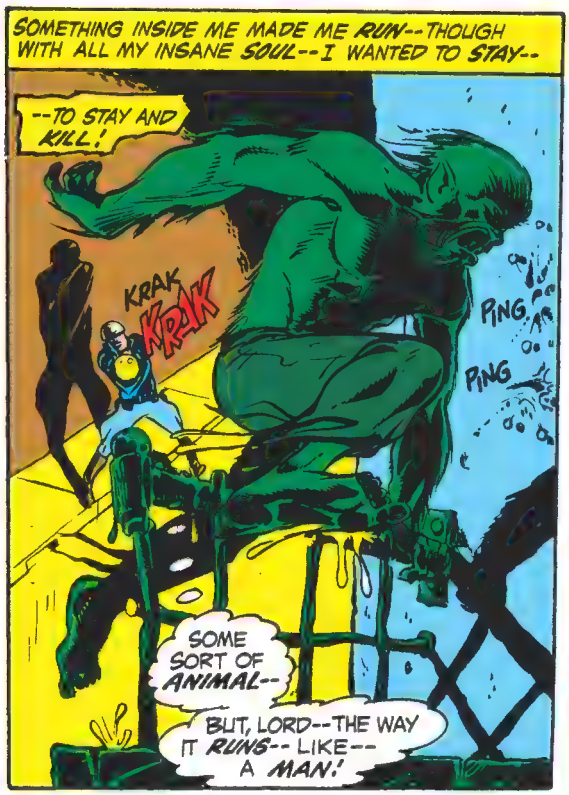

BUT I AM PASSING ...LIKE A DREAM.
I AM NOT HOME. I KNOW THAT NOW! THIS IS A PLACE OF PAIN ...OF IMPERFECTION...
...I COULD HAVE MADE IT OTHERWISE...COULD HAVE GIVEN YOU HOPE!
I-- I'M TED SALLIS AGAIN!
AND ME! I'M JACK RUSSELL!
MY SHAGGY SIDE IS GONE!
YES.
MY HANDS. THEY ARE NO LONGER WHITE!
I'M WHOLE AGAIN!
YES.
AND I'M NOT THE GHOST RIDER ANYMORE!
YOU'VE CHANGED ME!
YES.
BUT I AM PASSING.
AND THE DREAM CANNOT BE MAINTAINED!
THEY'RE LEAVING!
WANDERING BACK DOWN THE MOUNTAIN... BACK TO WHEREVER THEY CAME FROM!
I CAN STILL CHANGE BACK TO NORMAL. BUT I HAVE A HUNCH THAT, FOR THEM, NORMAL JUST ISN'T POSSIBLE!


WHAT A BUMMER!
I--THEY'RE WHITE AGAIN!
I AM STILL CURSED!
AND I HELPED TO DESTROY MY ONE CHANCE AT SALVATION!
YOU HEAR HIS WAIL, JOHNNY BLAZE, AND IT IS A SOUND YOU WILL NEVER FORGET AS LONG AS YOU LIVE.
GO, BROTHER ... YOU WHO TRIED TO SAVE ME FROM THAT WHICH IS REAL.
I--ISN'T THERE SOMETHING I CAN DO?
NO! THE DREAM IS OVER! MY TIME AND PLACE MUST PASS AWAY WITH IT.
I AM GOING ... HOME.
FREEWAY L.A. BUSINESS LANES
THE AIR SIGHS AND GIVES UP THE GHOST OF A PIECE OF A DREAM THAT IS NO LONGER.
THIS IS GONNA BE ONE HECKUVA LONG NIGHT!
THE SKY AND THE STARS REAPPEAR ... AND LOS ANGELES RETURNS TO ITS OWN ... INTACT ...
AND I BET I'M MILES FROM THE NEAREST GAS STATION!
... FOR WHAT IS CHANGED BY A DREAM?
NEXT: IN THE DIM, DARK DAYS OF WW II THEY FIGHT FOR THE MOST PRIZED POSSESSION OF ALL.
THE LIBERTY LEGION!

MARVEL SPOTLIGHT
MARVEL COMICS GROUP TM
25¢
2
FEB
02120
MARVEL SPOTLIGHT ON...
WEREWOLF BY NIGHT
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
THE MOON.. IT'S SO FULL --SO BRIGHT--
AND--I'M STARTING TO CHANGE AGAIN--
--TURNING INTO--
AARRRGHH
NIGHT OF FULL MOON--NIGHT OF FEAR!

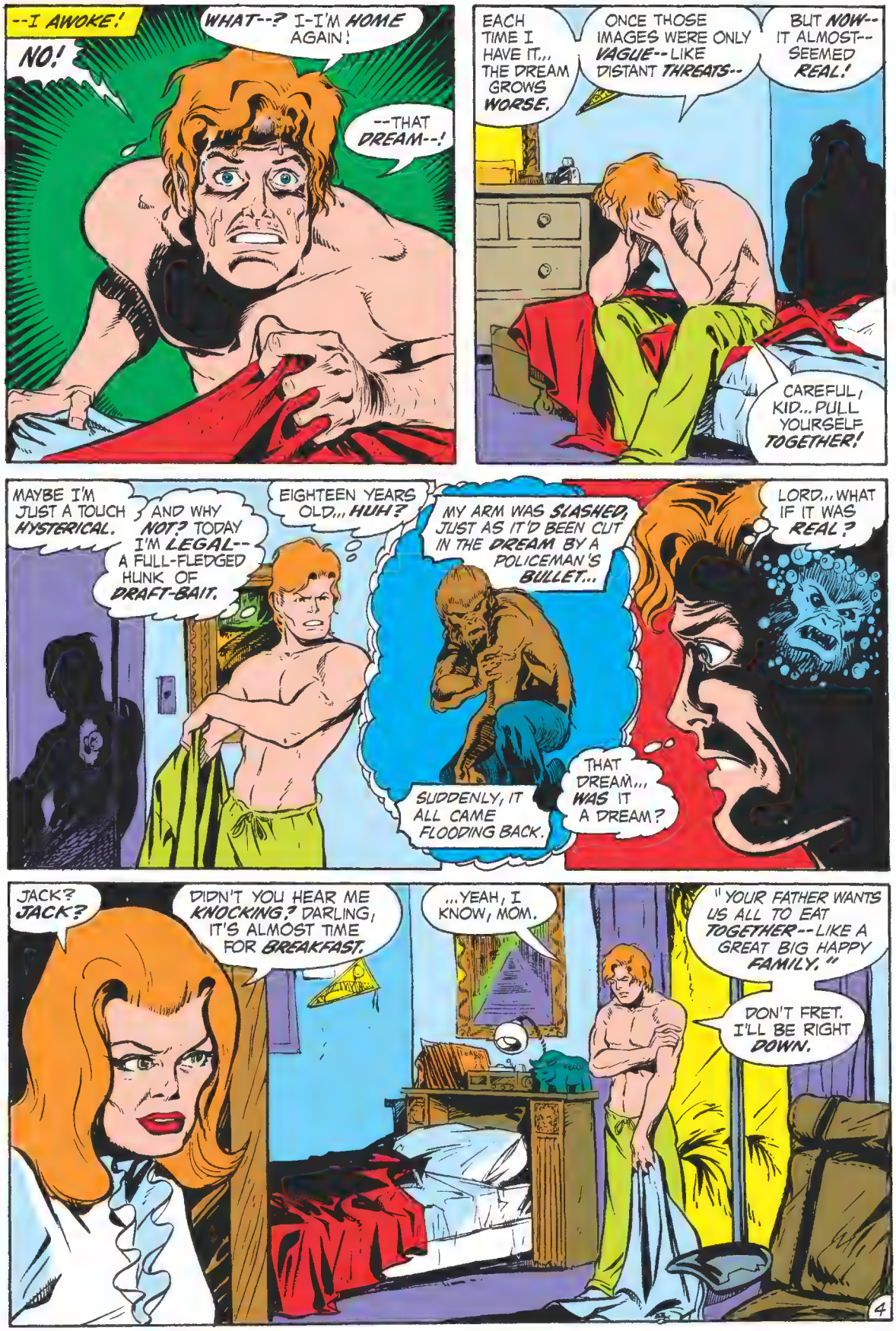
FIRST NIGHT:
AS THOUGH IN A DREAM, I FOUND MYSELF WALKING A MIST-MOISTENED STREET IN DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES...
SOMETHING WAS CRAWLING WITHIN ME, RAGING TO BE RELEASED. MY MIND FELT DULL AND HAZY...
...I COULDN'T THINK!
THERE WAS A SOUND FROM THE ALLEY BEFORE ME. A GLOW OF MOONLIGHT SEEMED TO GLINT ON SOMETHING METAL--A KNIFE!
THE CRAWLING THING WITHIN ME WELLED UP--AND MY VISION SUDDENLY BLURRED! EVERYTHING WENT SCARLET--
WEREWOLF BY NIGHT
--AND I-- SNARLED!!
AAAARRRRRNN
OH NO-- NNOOO!
THE LAST THING I KNEW-- I ATTACKED--AND BORE THE MUGGER DOWN--!
7822
1

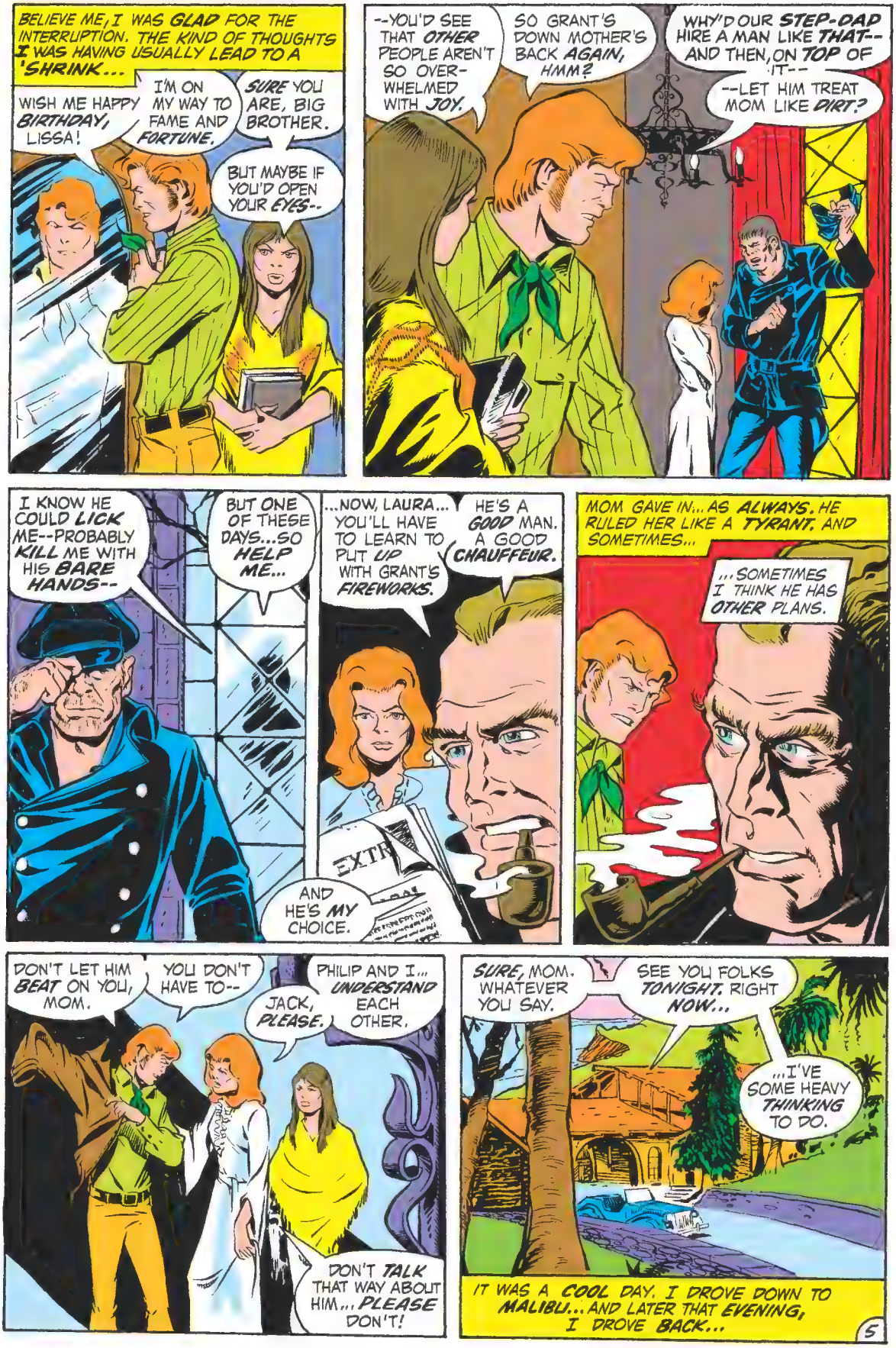

"EVEN A MAN WHO'S PURE OF HEART AND SAYS HIS PRAYERS AT NIGHT, MAY BECOME A WOLF WHEN THE WOLFBANE BLOOMS, AND THE MOON IS FULL AND BRIGHT!"
--OLD FOLK POEM
BOOM
THE WORDS SEEMED TO ECHO IN MY SKULL--I STRUGGLED WITH SOMETHING SNARLING AND VICIOUS WITHIN MY SOUL--AND WHEN THE MADNESS PASSED--
AAAARRN!
THE MAN I'D ATTACKED--WAS DEAD!
YOU!
HOLD IT RIGHT THERE--WHAT IN THE NAME OF--
GOOD LORD!
LAPD
STAN LEE PRESENTS: A NEW MARVEL MASTERWORK BY:
GERRY CONWAY SCRIPTER * MICHAEL PLOOG ARTIST
JOHN COSTA, LETTERER
CONCEIVED AND PLOTTED BY: ROY and JEANIE THOMAS


SOMETHING INSIDE ME MADE ME RUN--THOUGH WITH ALL MY INSANE SOUL--I WANTED TO STAY--
--TO STAY AND KILL!
KRAK
KRAK
PING
PING
SOME SORT OF ANIMAL--
BUT, LORD--THE WAY IT RUNS--LIKE--A MAN!

THERE WAS A BRIDGE...A MUDDY RIVER. I DIVED IN, MY SHOULDER AFIRE WITH THE AGONY OF A GLANCING BULLET...
MUST... STAY IN THE SHADOWS... LET THEM THINK... I'M IN THE RIVER!
MY ARM... MY ARM!
2

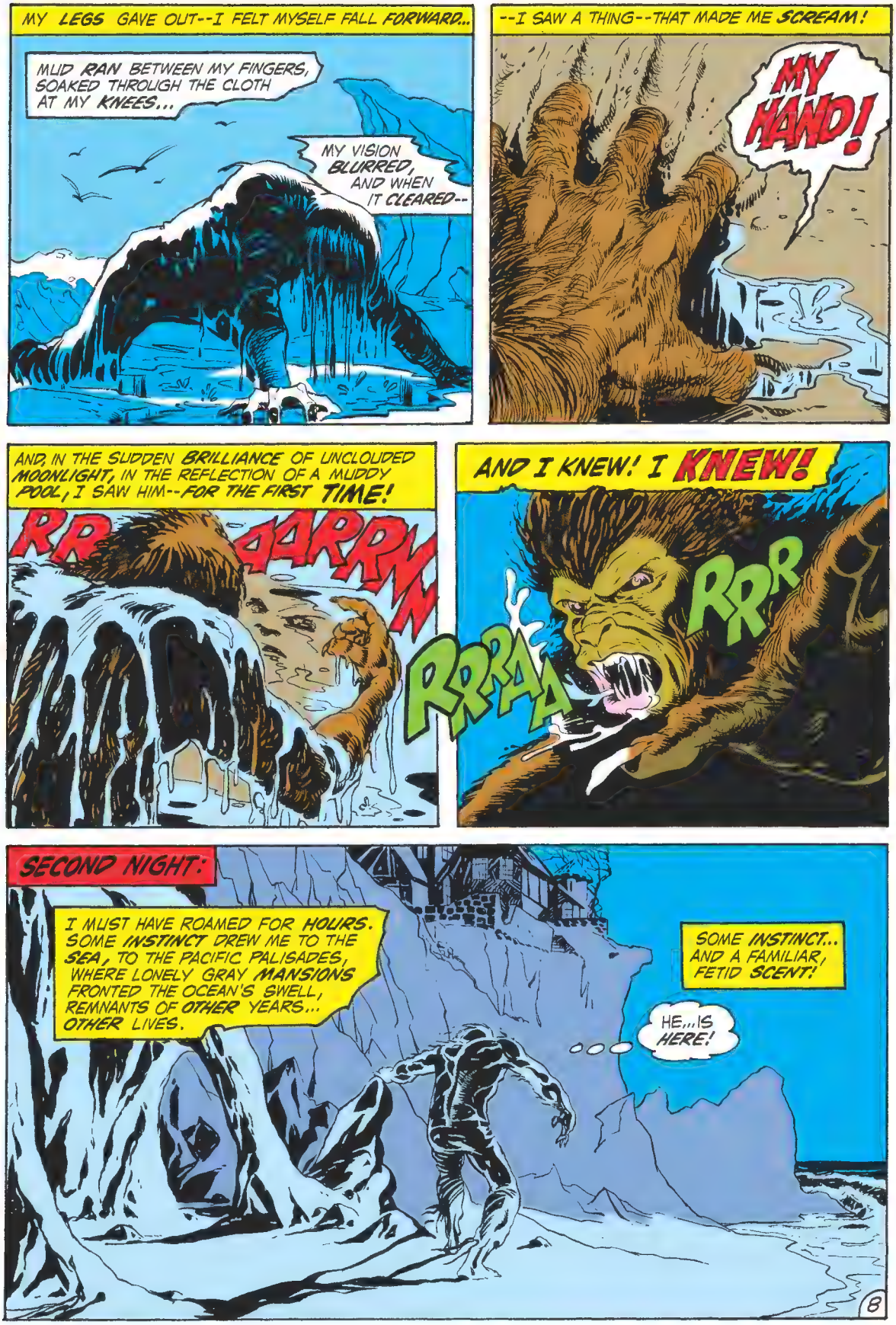
SOMEHOW I GOT AWAY, STUMBLED BACK TO THE ALLEYS, TO THE STENCH OF THINGS DECAYED.
THE CITY-STENCH REPELLED ME...I YEARNED FOR THE ODORS OF THE FOREST, THE SOFT FEEL OF LOAM BENEATH MY FEET...
WHERE... AM I? HOW DID I GET HERE?
WHAT IS THIS PLACE... THESE BUILDINGS... WHERE ARE THE TREES...
...THE HILLS?
MY FEET SEEMED TO FLY AT MY COMMAND...BARRIERS WERE NOTHING TO ME...
I RAN... I RAN...
...UNDER THE LIGHT OF THE BRIGHT FULL MOON...I RAN!
THE FOREST... I MUST RETURN TO THE FOREST!
I MUST... FIND MY WAY... HOME!
WHY AM I HERE? WHY?
...MY THOUGHTS... UNCLEAR!
WHY AM I HERE?
MY SKIN IS BURNING...
BUT THE NIGHT GAVE ME NO ANSWER, AND I FELT MY DARK DREAM SLIPPING, AND IN A MOMENT--


--I AWOKE!
NO!
WHAT--? I-I'M HOME AGAIN!
--THAT DREAM--!
EACH TIME I HAVE IT... THE DREAM GROWS WORSE.
ONCE THOSE IMAGES WERE ONLY VAGUE--LIKE DISTANT THREATS--
BUT NOW--IT ALMOST--SEEMED REAL!
CAREFUL, KID... PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER!
MAYBE I'M JUST A TOUCH HYSTERICAL.
AND WHY NOT? TODAY I'M LEGAL--A FULL-FLEDGED HUNK OF DRAFT-BAIT.
EIGHTEEN YEARS OLD... HUH?
MY ARM WAS SLASHED, JUST AS IT'D BEEN CUT IN THE DREAM BY A POLICEMAN'S BULLET...
SUDDENLY, IT ALL CAME FLOODING BACK.
THAT DREAM... WAS IT A DREAM?
LORD... WHAT IF IT WAS REAL?
JACK? JACK?
DIDN'T YOU HEAR ME KNOCKING? DARLING, IT'S ALMOST TIME FOR BREAKFAST.
...YEAH, I KNOW, MOM.
"YOUR FATHER WANTS US ALL TO EAT TOGETHER--LIKE A GREAT BIG HAPPY FAMILY."
DON'T FRET. I'LL BE RIGHT DOWN.


BELIEVE ME, I WAS GLAD FOR THE INTERRUPTION. THE KIND OF THOUGHTS I WAS HAVING USUALLY LEAD TO A 'SHRINK...
WISH ME HAPPY BIRTHDAY, LISSA!
I'M ON MY WAY TO FAME AND FORTUNE.
SURE YOU ARE, BIG BROTHER.
BUT MAYBE IF YOU'D OPEN YOUR EYES--
--YOU'D SEE THAT OTHER PEOPLE AREN'T SO OVER-WHELMED WITH JOY.
SO GRANT'S DOWN MOTHER'S BACK AGAIN, HMM?
WHY'D OUR STEP-DAD HIRE A MAN LIKE THAT-- AND THEN, ON TOP OF IT--
--LET HIM TREAT MOM LIKE DIRT?
I KNOW HE COULD LICK ME--PROBABLY KILL ME WITH HIS BARE HANDS--
BUT ONE OF THESE DAYS...SO HELP ME...
...NOW, LAURA... YOU'LL HAVE TO LEARN TO PUT UP WITH GRANT'S FIREWORKS.
HE'S A GOOD MAN. A GOOD CHAUFFEUR.
EXTR
AND HE'S MY CHOICE.
MOM GAVE IN... AS ALWAYS. HE RULED HER LIKE A TYRANT. AND SOMETIMES...
...SOMETIMES I THINK HE HAS OTHER PLANS.
DON'T LET HIM BEAT ON YOU, MOM.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO--
JACK, PLEASE.
PHILIP AND I... UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER.
DON'T TALK THAT WAY ABOUT HIM... PLEASE DON'T!
SURE, MOM. WHATEVER YOU SAY.
SEE YOU FOLKS TONIGHT. RIGHT NOW...
...I'VE SOME HEAVY THINKING TO DO.
IT WAS A COOL DAY. I DROVE DOWN TO MALIBU... AND LATER THAT EVENING, I DROVE BACK...
5

...AND IN MY HEAD, AS USUAL, NOTHING AT ALL HAD CHANGED!
--JACK RUSSELL-- ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME?
YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE MILES AWAY.
SORRY, TERRI.
THERE'S JUST... SOMETHING ABOUT THE AIR.
THE AIR? I DON'T--
EXCUSE ME, TERRI.
JACK, DEAR, IT'S TIME FOR A LITTLE CAKE-CUTTING.
THE OTHERS ARE ALL WAITING FOR YOU.
THEY... ARE?
JACK--IS THERE SOMETHING WRONG?
YOU LOOK SO PALE...!
DON'T KNOW. SOMETHING'S... HAPPENING TO ME...
...SOMETHING... WANTS TO GET OUT!
AAAAARGH
JACK!
GET--GET AWAY FROM ME--DON'T COME NEAR ME!
HAVE TO-- GET AWAY FROM HERE--
--HAVE TO GET AWAY!
JACK!
BLACKNESS BLISTERED INSIDE ME, SWELLING UP OVER ME, DEVOURING ME--
ALL I COULD SEE WAS THE MOON!
THE MOON!
6

THERE WERE BUSHES IN THE BACK OF THE PATIO--I REACHED THEM, SLID INTO THE DARKNESS...
CAN'T--LET THEM SEE ME--
SOMETHING'S TWISTING UP MY INSIDES--
--RIPPING ME APART!
THROUGH A VEIL OF VEINED BLUE, I SAW THE BENT FORM OF GRANT, OUR CHAUFFEUR...
HE WAS WORKING ON THE CAR... DIDN'T SEE ME...
...AND THAT WAS HOW I WANTED IT TO STAY!
PERHAPS HE HEARD A SNAPPING TWIG, OR MAYBE THE RUSTLE OF PARTING LEAVES...
HUH?
WHO'S THERE?
IF IT'S THAT PUNK KID--I'LL BREAK 'IM.
NOTHIN'.
FIGURES. GETTIN' SO JUMPY ON THIS BLASTED JOB--
--EVERYTHIN' THAT'S GOT A SHADOW SEEMS TO MOVE!
MAYBE IF I'D THOUGHT ABOUT GRANT, ABOUT WHY HE WAS AT THE CAR SO LATE... MAYBE THINGS WOULDN'T HAVE HAPPENED THE WAY THEY DID.
YEAH, MAYBE.
MY MIND WASN'T IN ANY SHAPE TO THINK--LET ALONE WORRY ABOUT THINGS IN THE EVER-RECEDING FUTURE! MY THROAT FELT ON FIRE--AND SOMETHING IN MY CHEST--HAD CHANGED!

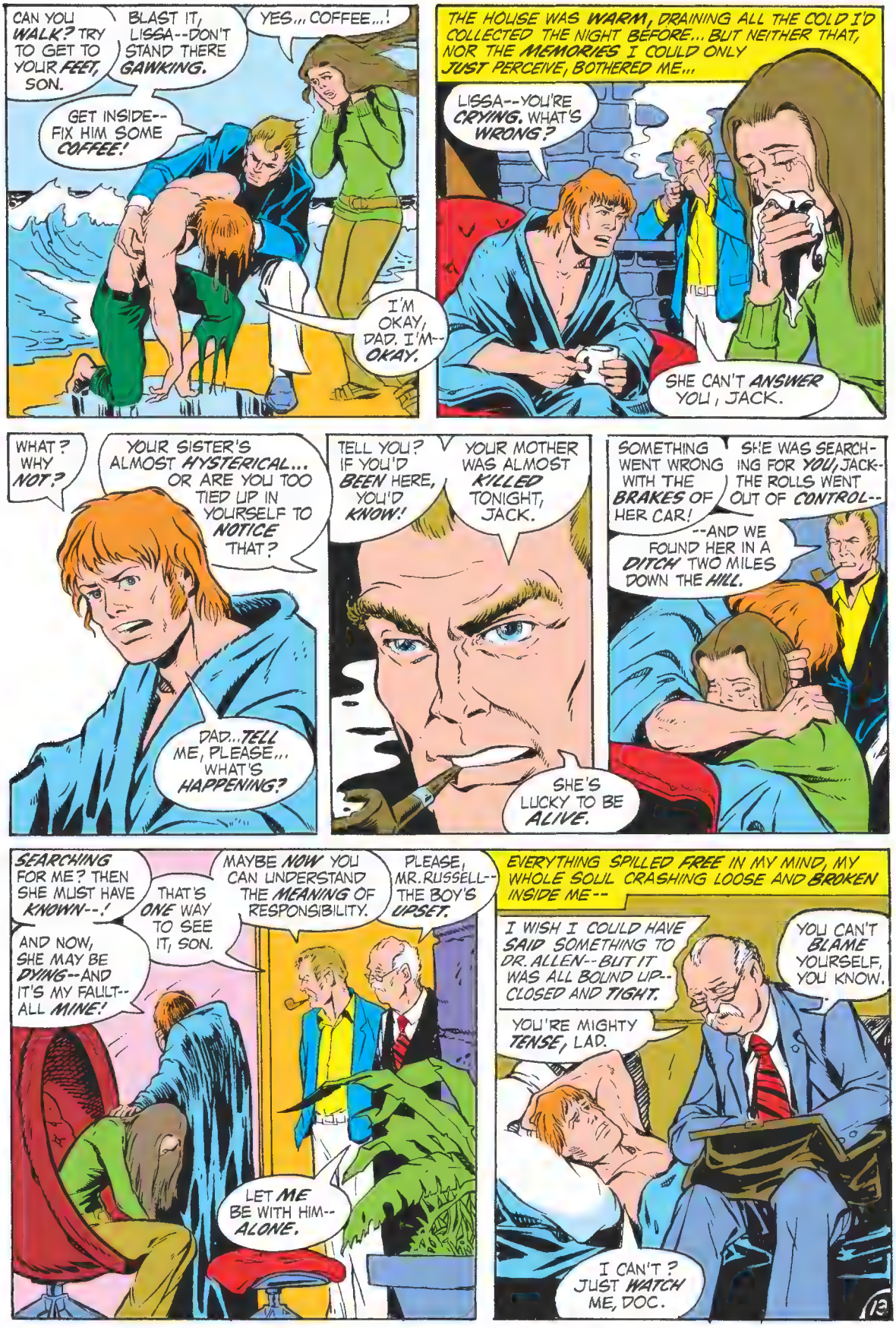

MY LEGS GAVE OUT--I FELT MYSELF FALL FORWARD...
MUD RAN BETWEEN MY FINGERS, SOAKED THROUGH THE CLOTH AT MY KNEES...
MY VISION BLURRED, AND WHEN IT CLEARED--
--I SAW A THING--THAT MADE ME SCREAM!
MY HAND!
AND, IN THE SUDDEN BRILLIANCE OF UNCLOUDED MOONLIGHT, IN THE REFLECTION OF A MUDDY POOL, I SAW HIM--FOR THE FIRST TIME!
RR
AARRN
AND I KNEW! I KNEW!
RRR
RRRAA
SECOND NIGHT:
I MUST HAVE ROAMED FOR HOURS. SOME INSTINCT DREW ME TO THE SEA, TO THE PACIFIC PALISADES, WHERE LONELY GRAY MANSIONS FRONTED THE OCEAN'S SWELL, REMNANTS OF OTHER YEARS... OTHER LIVES.
SOME INSTINCT... AND A FAMILIAR, FETID SCENT!
HE...IS HERE!
8

THERE'D BEEN RUMORS ALL WEEK--TALES OF A ROVING PACK OF WILD DOGS HUNTING WESTERN LOS ANGELES...
I'D READ THE PAPERS, KNEW THE STORY... BUT NOW A DARKER PART OF MYSELF WAS URGING ME ONWARD...
...BECAUSE NOW I KNEW THE TRUTH!
I THREW MYSELF AGAINST THE GLASS-PANELED DOOR, AND IT SHATTERED INWARD--!
AAAA...RRR
STARING INTO THE PITCH BLACKNESS, I DREW UP AND SNARLED--
--AND FROM THAT BLACKNESS-- HE ANSWERED!
RRRRRRGGU
SMALL ONE-- SMALL WOLF!
HE IS SHRUNKEN... UGLY! AND YET... I CAN HATE HIM...
FOR HE CAN HUNT THE FOREST... HE CAN RUN THE LAND!
RRRRUNRRRR

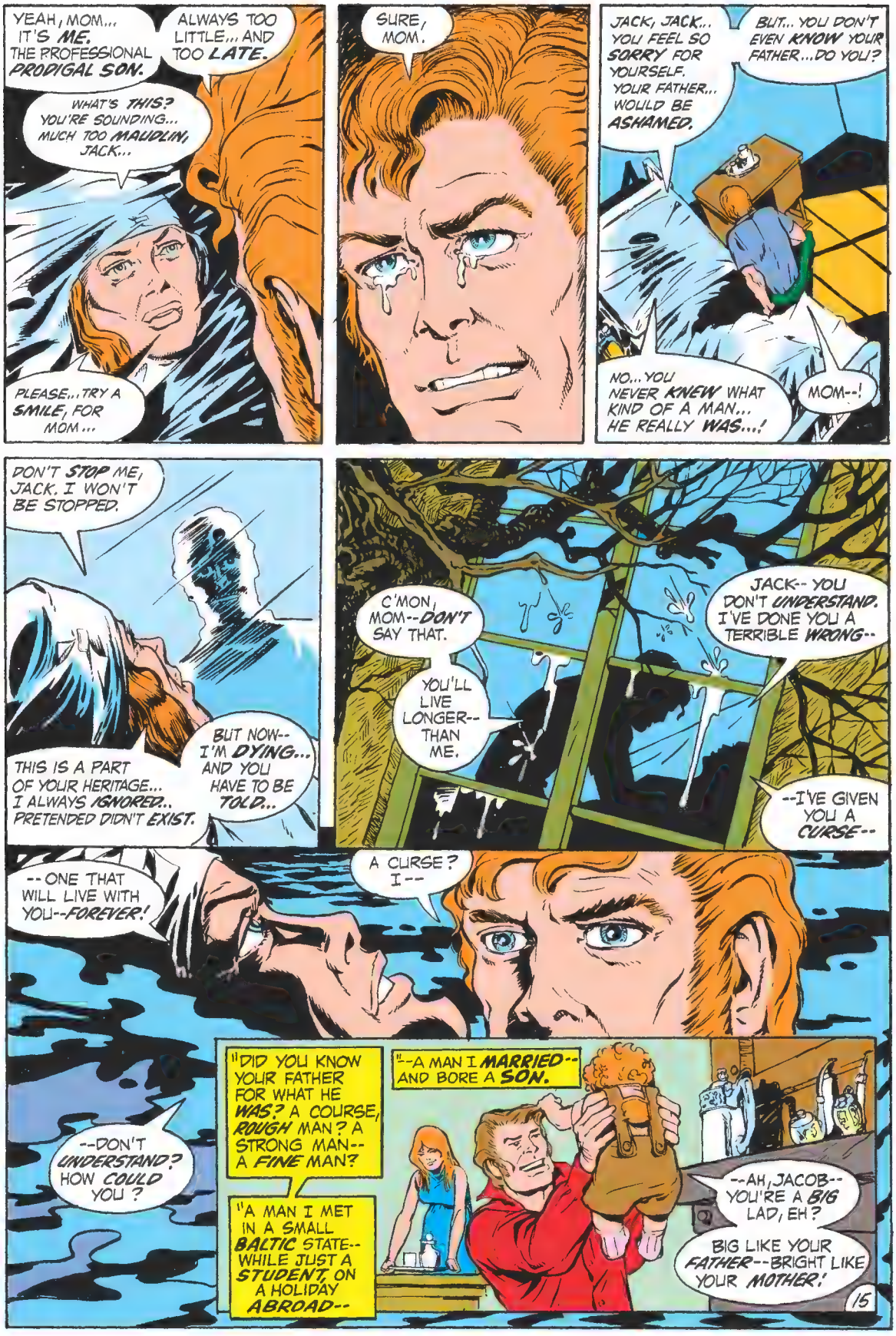
AND FOR THAT--
--I MUST KILL HIM!
UURGGAAR
RROWR
MUSCLES KNOTTING, IT SPRANG!
I CAUGHT IT IN MID-LEAP--
AARGH
--IT'S CLAWS SLASHING AT MY NECK--
--AND STRAINING--I PUSHED IT BACK!
RRGHAARR
EVERY NERVE, EVERY MUSCLE TENSED--
--AND I FLUNG IT AWAY!
YOOOW
THUD!

I MUST WATCH... THIS ONE. HE IS FAST. HE MOVES... AS I MOVE.
I CAN SEE... THE HATE IN HIS EYES...
HE WAITS FOR ME...TO COME NEARER... AND THEN...
...HE ATTACKS!
BROTHER OF THE FOREST-- NOW I DESTROY YOU!
THE WINDOW--!
--NO!
CRASH
SUDDENLY THERE WAS ONLY AIR BENEATH ME--MY MIND SCREAMED--MY CHEST HEAVED WITH THE FEAR OF DEATH--
--FOR I WAS AN ANIMAL NOW--AND DEATH WAS THE BEGINNING AND END OF MY MIND'S UNDERSTANDING!
BUT... I WILL NOT BE... THE ONE TO DIE!
NO... I AM STRONGER... MUCH STRONGER...
RRRR...!!!!
...AND ALWAYS THE STRONGER WINS!
AND, AS MY ENEMY FELL-- MY HEART SOARED-- FOR I KNEW, AS I'D ALWAYS KNOWN--

--I WOULD SURVIVE!
AAAHHH


CAN YOU WALK? TRY TO GET TO YOUR FEET, SON.
BLAST IT, LISSA--DON'T STAND THERE GAWKING.
YES... COFFEE...!
GET INSIDE-- FIX HIM SOME COFFEE!
I'M OKAY, DAD. I'M-- OKAY.
THE HOUSE WAS WARM, DRAINING ALL THE COLD I'D COLLECTED THE NIGHT BEFORE... BUT NEITHER THAT, NOR THE MEMORIES I COULD ONLY JUST PERCEIVE, BOTHERED ME...
LISSA--YOU'RE CRYING. WHAT'S WRONG?
SHE CAN'T ANSWER YOU, JACK.
WHAT? WHY NOT?
YOUR SISTER'S ALMOST HYSTERICAL... OR ARE YOU TOO TIED UP IN YOURSELF TO NOTICE THAT?
DAD...TELL ME, PLEASE... WHAT'S HAPPENING?
TELL YOU? IF YOU'D BEEN HERE, YOU'D KNOW!
YOUR MOTHER WAS ALMOST KILLED TONIGHT, JACK.
SHE'S LUCKY TO BE ALIVE.
SOMETHING WENT WRONG WITH THE BRAKES OF HER CAR!
SHE WAS SEARCHING FOR YOU, JACK-- THE ROLLS WENT OUT OF CONTROL--
--AND WE FOUND HER IN A DITCH TWO MILES DOWN THE HILL.
SEARCHING FOR ME? THEN SHE MUST HAVE KNOWN--!
AND NOW, SHE MAY BE DYING--AND IT'S MY FAULT-- ALL MINE!
THAT'S ONE WAY TO SEE IT, SON.
MAYBE NOW YOU CAN UNDERSTAND THE MEANING OF RESPONSIBILITY.
PLEASE, MR. RUSSELL-- THE BOY'S UPSET.
LET ME BE WITH HIM-- ALONE.
EVERYTHING SPILLED FREE IN MY MIND, MY WHOLE SOUL CRASHING LOOSE AND BROKEN INSIDE ME--
I WISH I COULD HAVE SAID SOMETHING TO DR. ALLEN--BUT IT WAS ALL BOUND UP-- CLOSED AND TIGHT.
YOU CAN'T BLAME YOURSELF, YOU KNOW.
YOU'RE MIGHTY TENSE, LAD.
I CAN'T? JUST WATCH ME, DOC.
13

HE GAVE ME A SHOT--SOMETHING TO RELAX ME, HE SAID. I HEARD HIM SPEAKING TO MY STEP-FATHER BEFORE HE LEFT--THE WORLD SOUNDED DISTANT, AS THOUGH I HEARD SOUND ONLY THROUGH A THICK WOOLEN CLOTH...
JUST AS HE WAS LEAVING, I HEARD THE PHONE--!
RING RING
--HEARD MY STEP-FATHER ANSWER IT, THROUGH THE ROAR OF IMAGINARY BREAKERS--!
GRANT! WHERE IN--WHAT?
ALL RIGHT, I'LL MEET YOU. SOUTH STREET? THE WAREHOUSE?
YES, YES... I'LL HAVE THE MONEY, BLAST IT...!
AND THEN IT ALL FADED, MELTING INTO BLACK...
AND WHEN I WOKE, IT WAS MID-AFTERNOON...
MOM! LORD--HOW COULD I SLEEP--WHILE SHE--
I'D BETTER GET DOWN TO THE HOSPITAL--FIND OUT HOW SHE IS!
MRS. RUSSELL? SORRY, SON... SHE'S ON THE CRITICAL LIST.
THAT MEANS NO ONE CAN SEE HER--NO ONE.
SURE. THANKS.
MRS. PHILIP RUSSELL
NO VISITORS
LEAVE IT AT THAT? NO WAY.
SOMEHOW--I'VE GOTTA FIND OUT WHERE SHE IS... AND THAT MEANS...
...IT'S TIME TO PLAY EAVES-DROPPER.
THOSE TWO--TALKING ABOUT MOM. THANKS FOR THE INFO, FOLKS.
I'LL JUST WAIT TILL YOU LEAVE--
--AND THEN--I MAKE MY DRAMATIC ENTRANCE!
LORD--!
JACK...? IS IT YOU...?
14


YEAH, MOM... IT'S ME, THE PROFESSIONAL PRODIGAL SON.
ALWAYS TOO LITTLE... AND TOO LATE.
WHAT'S THIS? YOU'RE SOUNDING... MUCH TOO MAUDLIN, JACK...
PLEASE... TRY A SMILE, FOR MOM...
SURE, MOM.
JACK, JACK... YOU FEEL SO SORRY FOR YOURSELF. YOUR FATHER... WOULD BE ASHAMED.
BUT... YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW YOUR FATHER... DO YOU?
NO... YOU NEVER KNEW WHAT KIND OF A MAN... HE REALLY WAS...!
MOM--!
DON'T STOP ME, JACK. I WON'T BE STOPPED.
THIS IS A PART OF YOUR HERITAGE... I ALWAYS IGNORED.. PRETENDED DIDN'T EXIST.
BUT NOW-- I'M DYING... AND YOU HAVE TO BE TOLD...
C'MON, MOM--DON'T SAY THAT.
YOU'LL LIVE LONGER-- THAN ME.
JACK-- YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND. I'VE DONE YOU A TERRIBLE WRONG--
--I'VE GIVEN YOU A CURSE--
A CURSE? I--
--ONE THAT WILL LIVE WITH YOU--FOREVER!
--DON'T UNDERSTAND? HOW COULD YOU?
"DID YOU KNOW YOUR FATHER FOR WHAT HE WAS? A COURSE, ROUGH MAN? A STRONG MAN-- A FINE MAN?
"A MAN I MET IN A SMALL BALTIC STATE-- WHILE JUST A STUDENT, ON A HOLIDAY ABROAD--
"--A MAN I MARRIED-- AND BORE A SON.
--AH, JACOB-- YOU'RE A BIG LAD, EH?
BIG LIKE YOUR FATHER--BRIGHT LIKE YOUR MOTHER!

"THOSE FIRST TWO YEARS WERE *IDYLLIC*-- YET EVEN THEN, WHEN WE LIVED IN HIS FAMILY *CASTLE*-- EVEN WHEN *YOU* WERE BORN...AND YOUR SISTER *LISSA* WAS ON THE WAY...

"--I COULD SENSE SOME DARK *SECRET* THAT STOOD *BETWEEN* US--

"--A SECRET THAT BLOSSOMED LIKE SOME WICKED *FRUIT* ONCE A MONTH, WHEN HE WOULD LOCK HIMSELF IN THE SINGLE, MUSTY *TOWER*--"

"--AND *REMAIN* THERE, FOR A TRILOGY OF DAYS, AND A TRILOGY OF *NIGHTS*."

"HE TOLD ME HE *STUDIED* HIS BOOKS ON THOSE NIGHTS, AND FOR TWO YEARS I TRIED TO *BELIEVE* HIM--

"--UNTIL THAT NIGHT OF THE *STORM*-- WHEN A BOLT OF *LIGHTNING* TORE OUT THE TOWER'S *SIDE*!

"FOR, LATER THAT SAME NIGHT--IN THE VILLAGE *BELOW*, ON A RAIN-SLICKED COBBLED *STREET*--

"--THE FIRST STONE OF OUR LIFE TOGETHER *CRUMBLED*, AS THE VILLAGE *CARPENTER* MADE HIS WAY HOMEWARD THROUGH THE STREETS--

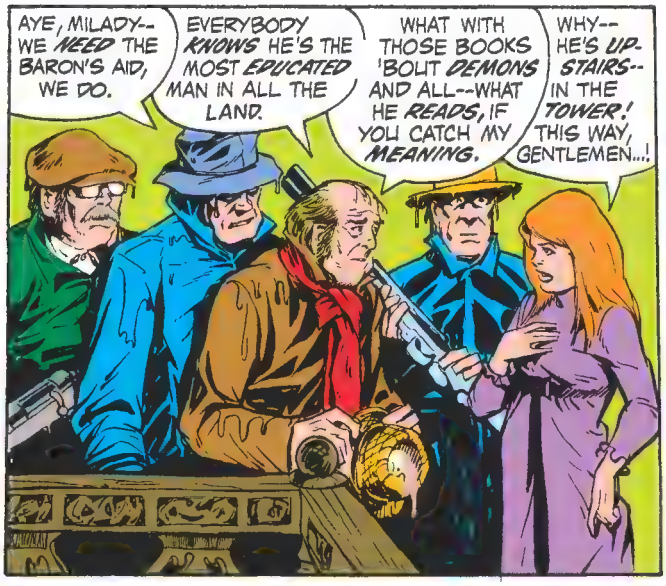
"--BUT NEVER *MADE* IT HOME--

WHO'S--*NO*!

AAARRGHHHH

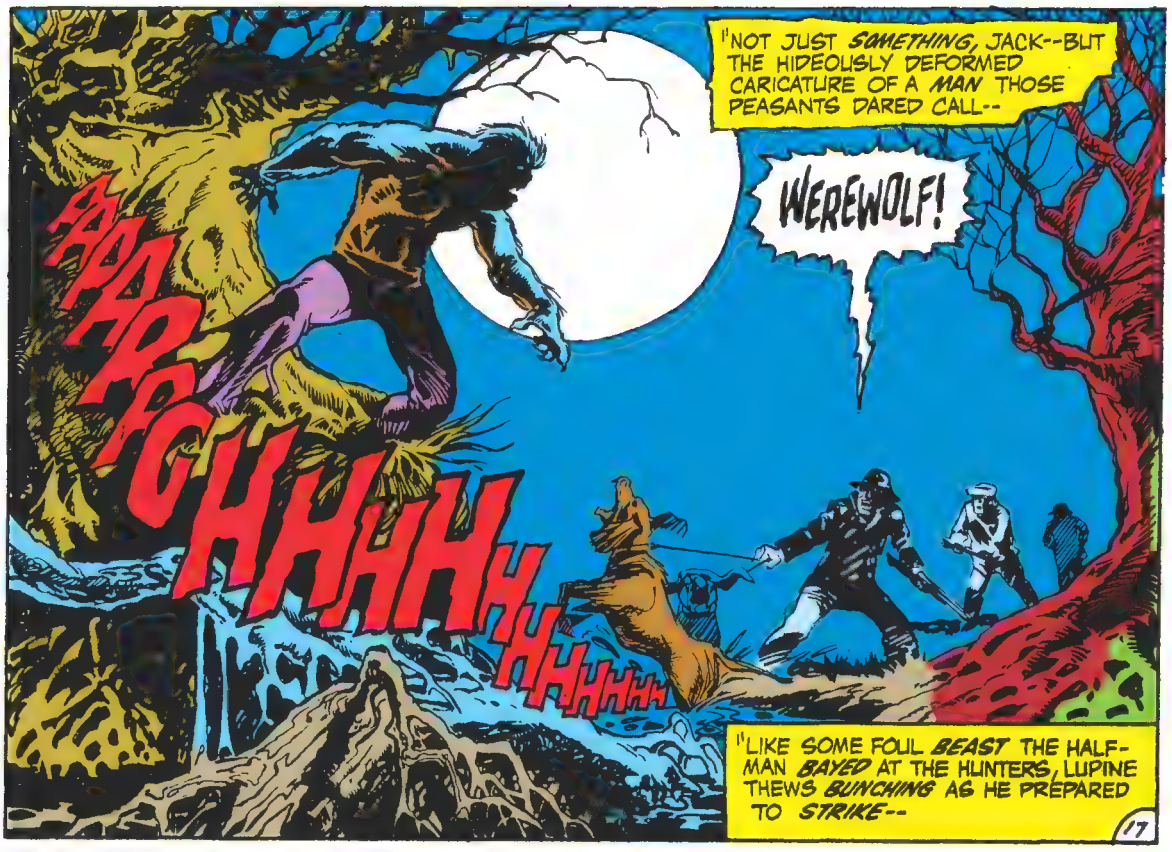
"--*NEVER* MADE IT HOME, AGAIN.

HHHH


AYE, MILADY--WE NEED THE BARON'S AID, WE DO.
EVERYBODY KNOWS HE'S THE MOST EDUCATED MAN IN ALL THE LAND.
WHAT WITH THOSE BOOKS 'BOUT DEMONS AND ALL--WHAT HE READS, IF YOU CATCH MY MEANING.
WHY--HE'S UP-STAIRS--IN THE TOWER! THIS WAY, GENTLEMEN...!

"BUT HE WASN'T THERE, JACK--AND IT WAS ONLY THEN THAT I BEGAN TO REALIZE THE NIGHTMARE I'D BECOME A PART OF...
GONE!
THE DEMON MUST HAVE TAKEN THE BARON, TOO.

"PERHAPS I MIGHT HAVE LEARNED TO LIVE WITH MY HUSBAND'S DEATH--BUT FATE WAS NOT SO KIND!
HE DIDN'T RETURN THE NEXT MORNING, BUT ON THE FOLLOWING NIGHT, AS THE TOWNSMEN HUNTED IN THE NORTHEN WOODS--
THERE--IN THE SHADOWS--!
--SOMETHING MOVED!


"NOT JUST SOMETHING, JACK--BUT THE HIDEOUSLY DEFORMED CARICATURE OF A MAN THOSE PEASANTS DARED CALL--
WEREWOLF!
AARRGHHHHHHHHHH
"LIKE SOME FOUL BEAST THE HALF-MAN BAYED AT THE HUNTERS, LUPINE THEWS BUNCHING AS HE PREPARED TO STRIKE--

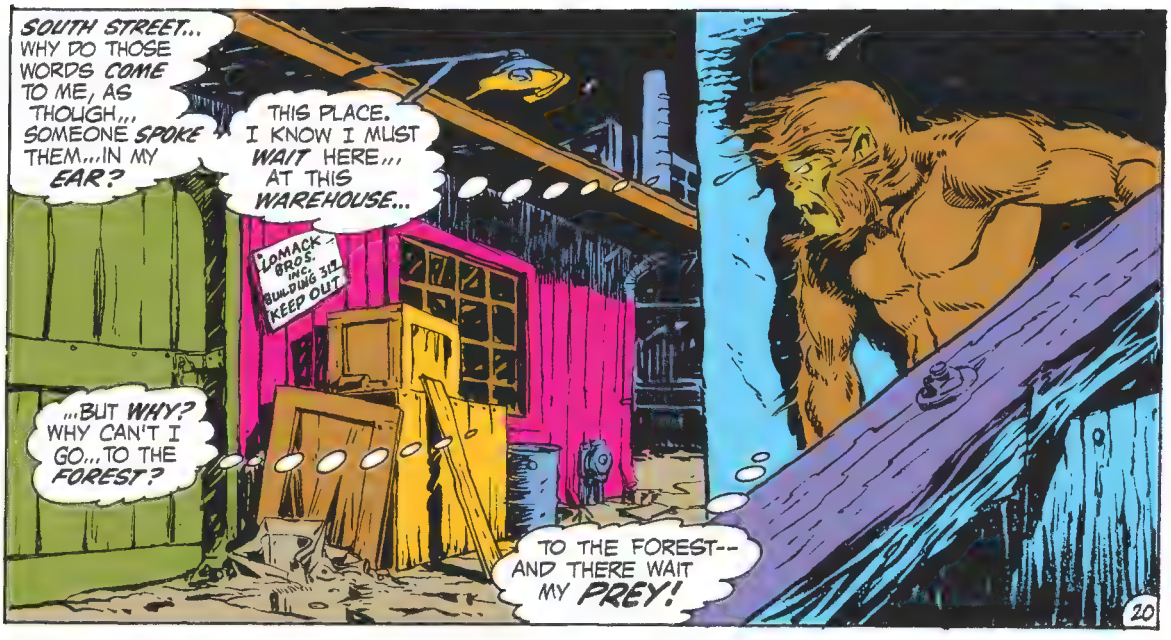
"--A STRIKE HE NEVER FINISHED!
"THOUGH I WASN'T THERE-- I COULD HEAR THE SOUND OF GUNSHOTS--
KA-POW!
KR-AK!
BLAM!
BLAM!
KER-PLOW
AAAAAAAGGGGRRRRR
"--I CAN HEAR THAT PITIFUL MONSTER'S CRY--EVERY NIGHT--EVERY MOMENT I TRY TO DREAM!"
"FOR, YOU SEE, THE MEN CAME TO ME LATER, AND TOLD ME THE HORRIBLE SECRET THEY'D UNCOVERED... AND I SUDDENLY KNEW WHY I'D BEEN FORBIDDEN TO ENTER MY HUSBAND'S TOWER ROOM... AND WHY THE PEASANTS HAD LOADED THEIR GUNS WITH SILVER BULLETS...
IT'S... HIM.
LORD... IT'S THE BARON!
MY FATHER... A WEREWOLF? THEN MAYBE THAT EXPLAINS IT ALL.
HOW COULD I HAVE TOLD YOU, JAKE?
I'D READ THE FAMILY TOMES--KNEW IT WAS AN HEREDITARY CURSE--ONE THAT YOU MAY WELL HAVE BEEN DAMNED WITH--
YOU--OR EVEN LITTLE LISSA...
AND THE CURSE--?
--TO BECOME A MAN-LIKE BEAST--FIRST ON THE NIGHT OF YOUR EIGHTEENTH YEAR--
--AND FOREVERMORE--WHENEVER THE FULL MOON BLOOMS!
18

AND THAT'S WHY YOU RETURNED TO THE STATES... AND MARRIED PHILIP RUSSELL?
TO WIPE OUT MY REAL FATHER'S BLOODIED MEMORY?
NO, JACK-- I LOVE PHILIP--
HE'S BEEN A GOOD HUSBAND--AND TRIED TO BE A GOOD FATHER.
PROMISE ME YOU'LL HONOR HIM--NEVER RAISE YOUR HAND AGAINST HIM... SWEAR TO ME, JACK--
I--I SWEAR IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT...THAT'S WHAT I'LL DO!
BUT EVEN AS I SAID THOSE WORDS, SOMETHING BOILED UP WITHIN ME--
--AND WHEN NEXT MY EYES WOULD FOCUS--
--A FORCE UNEARTHLY TORE MY MIND APART--
--THEY FOCUSED IN RED-- AND SAW ONLY DEATH!
THE WOMAN--IS DEAD! AND, THAT MAN--THAT PHILIP--
--HE DID IT--HE DID IT!
IN MY LAST RATIONAL MOMENTS, I'D PUT IT ALL TOGETHER--
--GRANT, BENT OVER MY MOTHER'S CAR-- THE ACCIDENT--
--GRANT ON THE PHONE WITH MY FATHER--MY STEP-FATHER--
--THE MAN I NOW HATED MOST!
19

I BARELY HEARD THE DOOR OPEN, BARELY HEARD THE INTERN'S MUTED CRY--!
--FEELING NOW, MRS. RUSS--WHA?
OH DEAR LORD!
AARRRGHHH

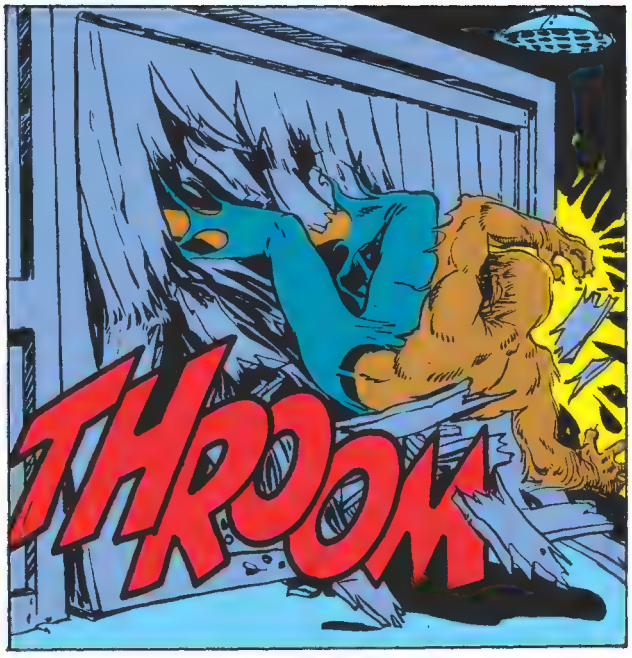
I SPRANG BACKWARD--FELT THE WINDOW BEHIND ME BREAK INTO SILVERY SHARDS--I DIDN'T WANT TO WAIT--DIDN'T WANT TO KILL HIM--NOT HIM--
KRASH!
FOR MY THOUGHTS WERE ON ANOTHER MAN--TWO MEN--

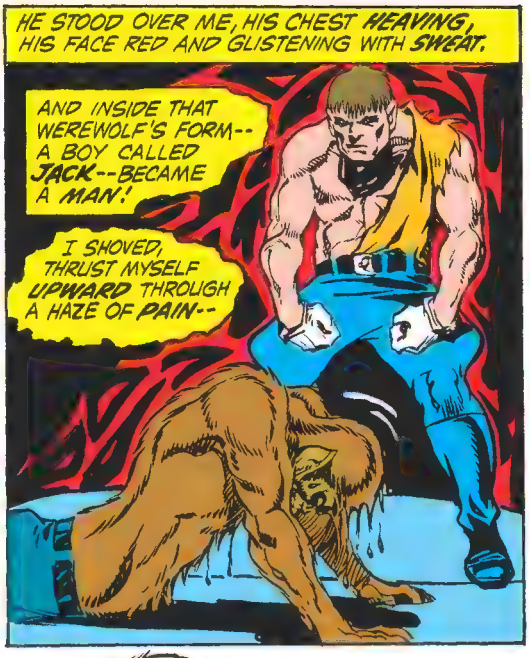
--AND FOR REASONS THE BEAST COULD NOT EXPLAIN, THE SOUL INSIDE MY TRANSFORMED BODY WANTED TO FIND THOSE TWO MEN...
--AND THEN THE BEAST COULD HAVE HIS WILL...!

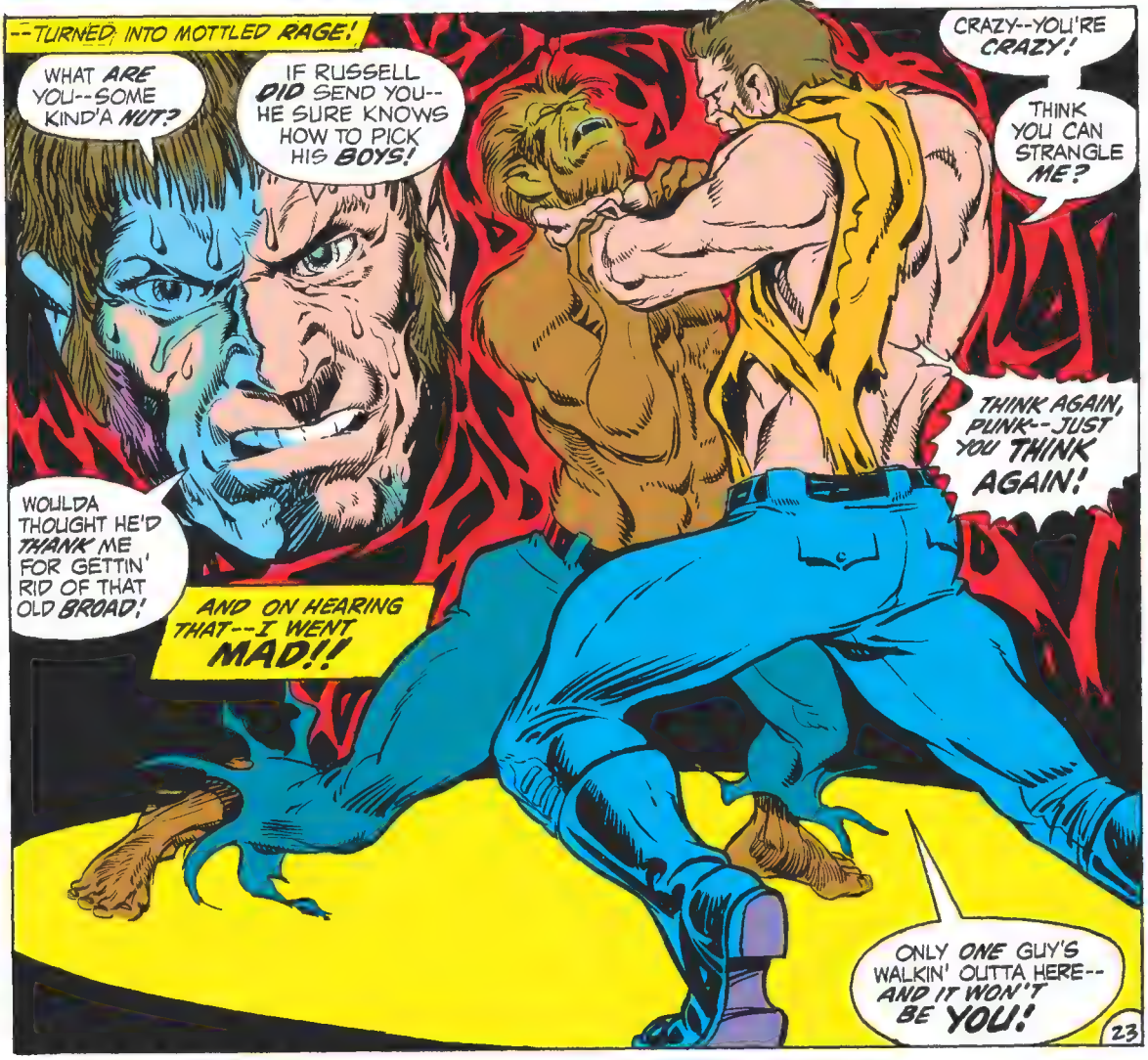

SOUTH STREET... WHY DO THOSE WORDS COME TO ME, AS THOUGH... SOMEONE SPOKE THEM...IN MY EAR?
THIS PLACE. I KNOW I MUST WAIT HERE... AT THIS WAREHOUSE...
LOMACK BROS. INC. BUILDING 312 KEEP OUT
...BUT WHY? WHY CAN'T I GO...TO THE FOREST?
TO THE FOREST-- AND THERE WAIT MY PREY!

STRUGGLING FOR CONTROL OVER THE BESTIAL SIDE OF MY BEING, I FELT MY MASTERY SLIPPING--
--BUT JUST BEFORE IT FELL, I HEARD--
--SOUNDS!
AND THIS TIME--IT IS NOT--
--A BROTHER OF THE WILD.
HE--HE IS GRANT--THE ONE WHO KILLED THAT WOMAN--
--HE IS THE ONE--I MUST KILL IN TURN!
I THREW MYSELF FORWARD, MY FULL WEIGHT SLAMMING AGAINST GRANT'S BACK--IT STAGGERED HIM-- BUT HE DIDN'T FALL--
WHAT--!
WHO THE DEVIL--?
UH-UNH, PRETTY BOY-- I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU'RE WEARING THAT FRIGHT MASK--
--BUT IT DOESN'T SCARE ME--NOT ONE LITTLE BIT!
STRONG-- DIDN'T REALIZE HOW STRONG THE MAN WAS--!
HIS STRENGTH-- IS LIKE THAT-- OF A BEAR!

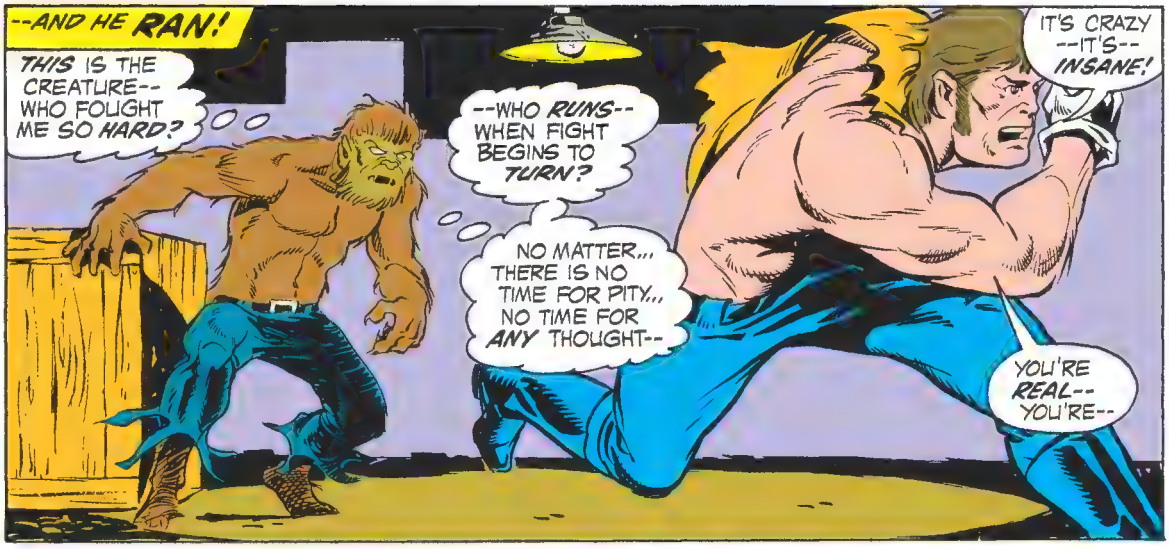
STILL KICKIN', HUH, PUNK?
DID THAT SLIMEY CRUD RUSSELL SEND YA?
KRACK
TRYIN' TO GET OUTTA PAYING ME MY DOUGH?
WELL--HERE'S SOMETHING YOU CAN TELL RUSSELL FOR ME--
MAX GRANT DOESN'T PLAY GAMES WITH TEN THOUSAND BILLS!
WOK
--AND ANYBODY I DO BUSINESS WITH--HAD BETTER NOT TRY!
SO--THAT MASK MUSTA PROTECTED YA A BIT--
MY MEMORY OF THAT TIME IS GRAY--I CAN ONLY RECALL AN EXULTATION--
--KNOWING THAT AT LAST-- I FOUGHT A MAN I COULD HATE!
--BUT NOT ANY MORE!
WAK
MAYBE-- THAT MASK-- CAN STOP ONE PUNCH--
--BUT HERE'S SOMETHING-- ALL THE RUBBER IN THE WORLD-- WON'T BE ABLE-- TO HELP!


THROOM

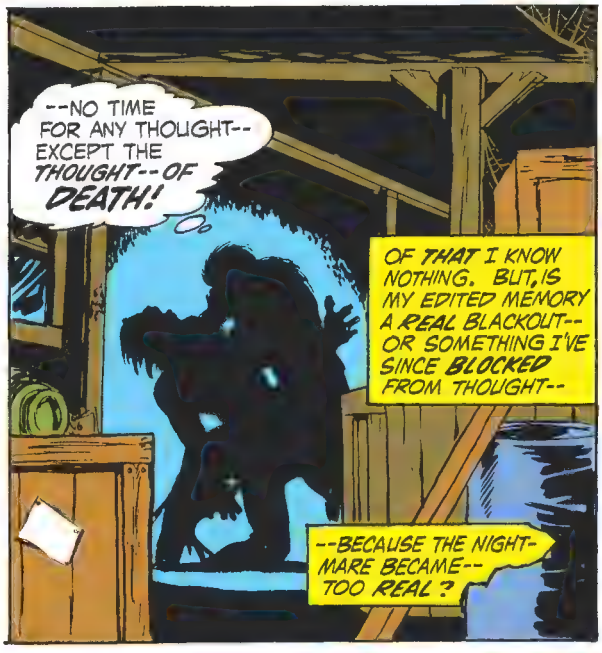

HE STOOD OVER ME, HIS CHEST HEAVING, HIS FACE RED AND GLISTENING WITH SWEAT.
AND INSIDE THAT WEREWOLF'S FORM--A BOY CALLED JACK--BECAME A MAN!
I SHOVED, THRUST MYSELF UPWARD THROUGH A HAZE OF PAIN--

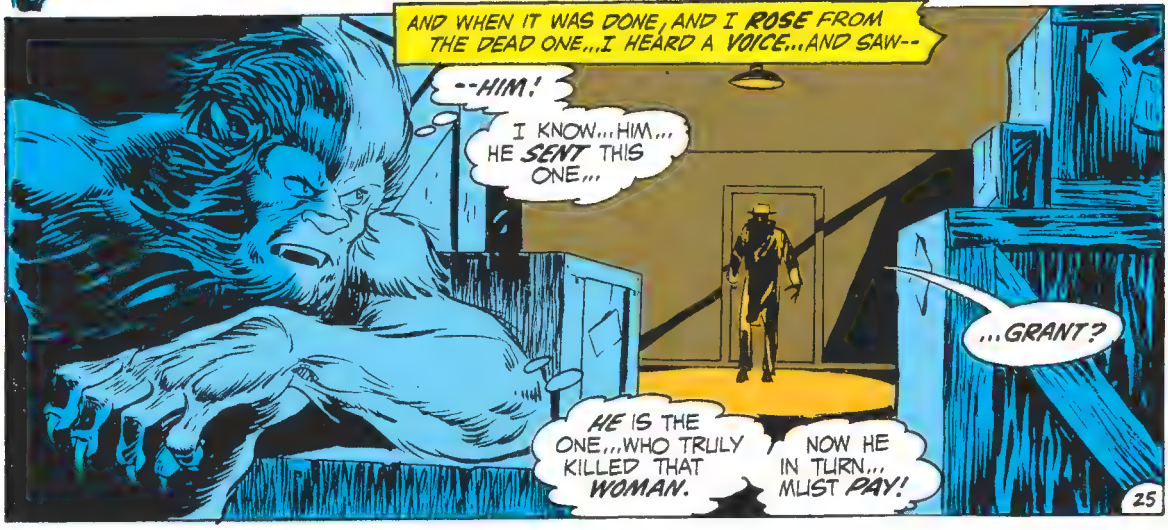

--TURNED INTO MOTTLED RAGE!
WHAT ARE YOU--SOME KIND'A NUT?
IF RUSSELL DID SEND YOU--HE SURE KNOWS HOW TO PICK HIS BOYS!
CRAZY--YOU'RE CRAZY!
THINK YOU CAN STRANGLE ME?
THINK AGAIN, PUNK--JUST YOU THINK AGAIN!
WOULDA THOUGHT HE'D THANK ME FOR GETTIN' RID OF THAT OLD BROAD!
AND ON HEARING THAT--I WENT MAD!!
ONLY ONE GUY'S WALKIN' OUTTA HERE--AND IT WON'T BE YOU!

NOW I KNEW--I KNEW FOR SURE--GRANT HAD KILLED MY MOTHER--AND I WOULD HAVE BET MY LIFE MY STEP-FATHER HAD SET HIM TO DO IT--
HIS SHEER WEIGHT CARRIED ME DOWN--I FELT THE SNARL IN MY THROAT DIE AS HIS FINGERS TIGHTENED--
--AND THEN IT BEGAN TO HAPPEN!
SOMETHING IN MY EYES--SOMETHING IN THE STENCH OF ANIMAL HATRED--TOLD HIM--
--YOUR--YOUR FACE--
--THAT--THAT MASK--
--IT--IT AIN'T--
AAAA
ARRRG
HH
--IT AIN'T A MASK!
--AND I BROKE HIS GRIP--AND DROVE HIM BACKWARD --AS HIS FADING NERVE SHATTERED...
24

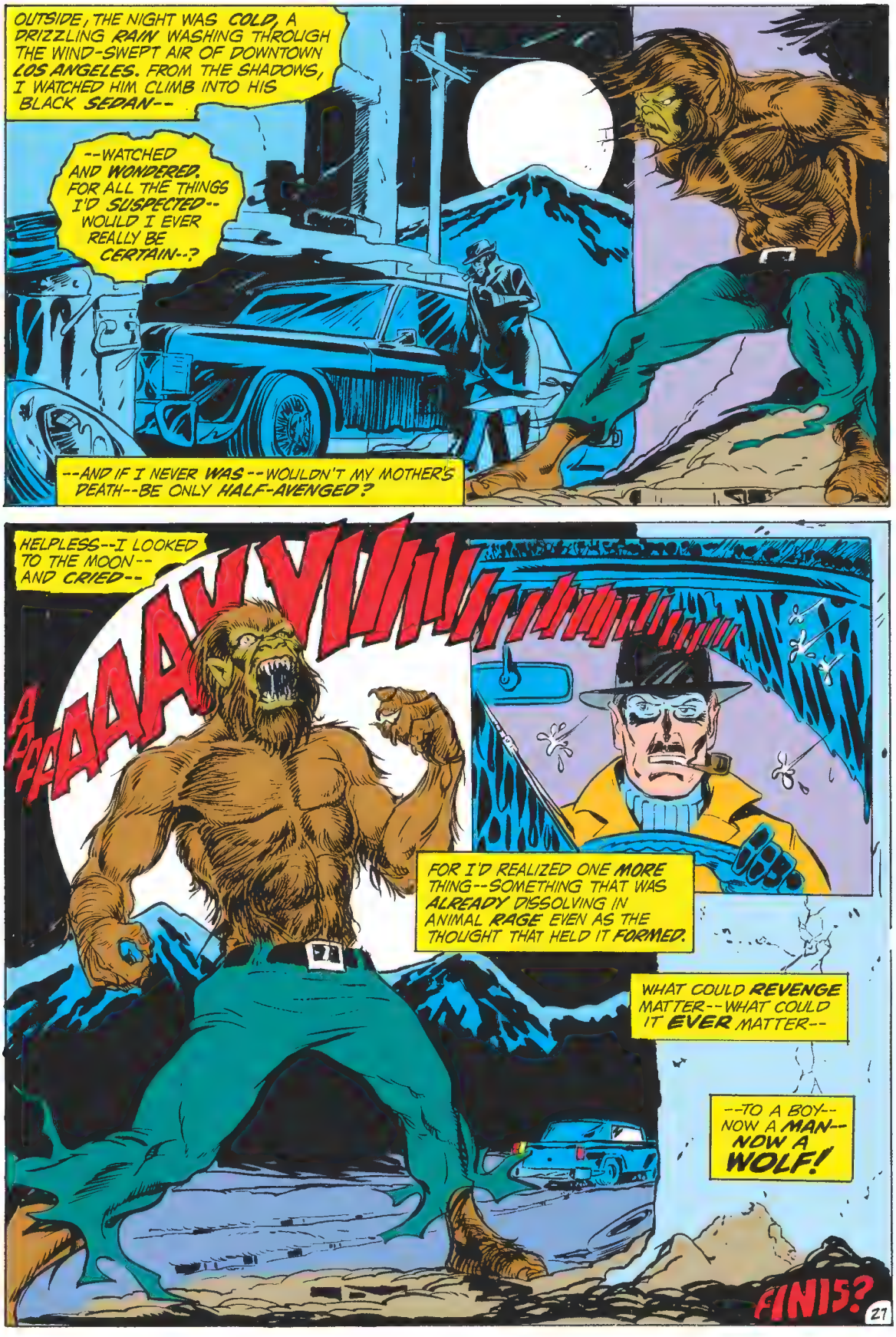

--AND HE RAN!
THIS IS THE CREATURE-- WHO FOUGHT ME SO HARD?
--WHO RUINS-- WHEN FIGHT BEGINS TO TURN?
NO MATTER... THERE IS NO TIME FOR PITY... NO TIME FOR ANY THOUGHT--
IT'S CRAZY --IT'S-- INSANE!
YOU'RE REAL-- YOU'RE--

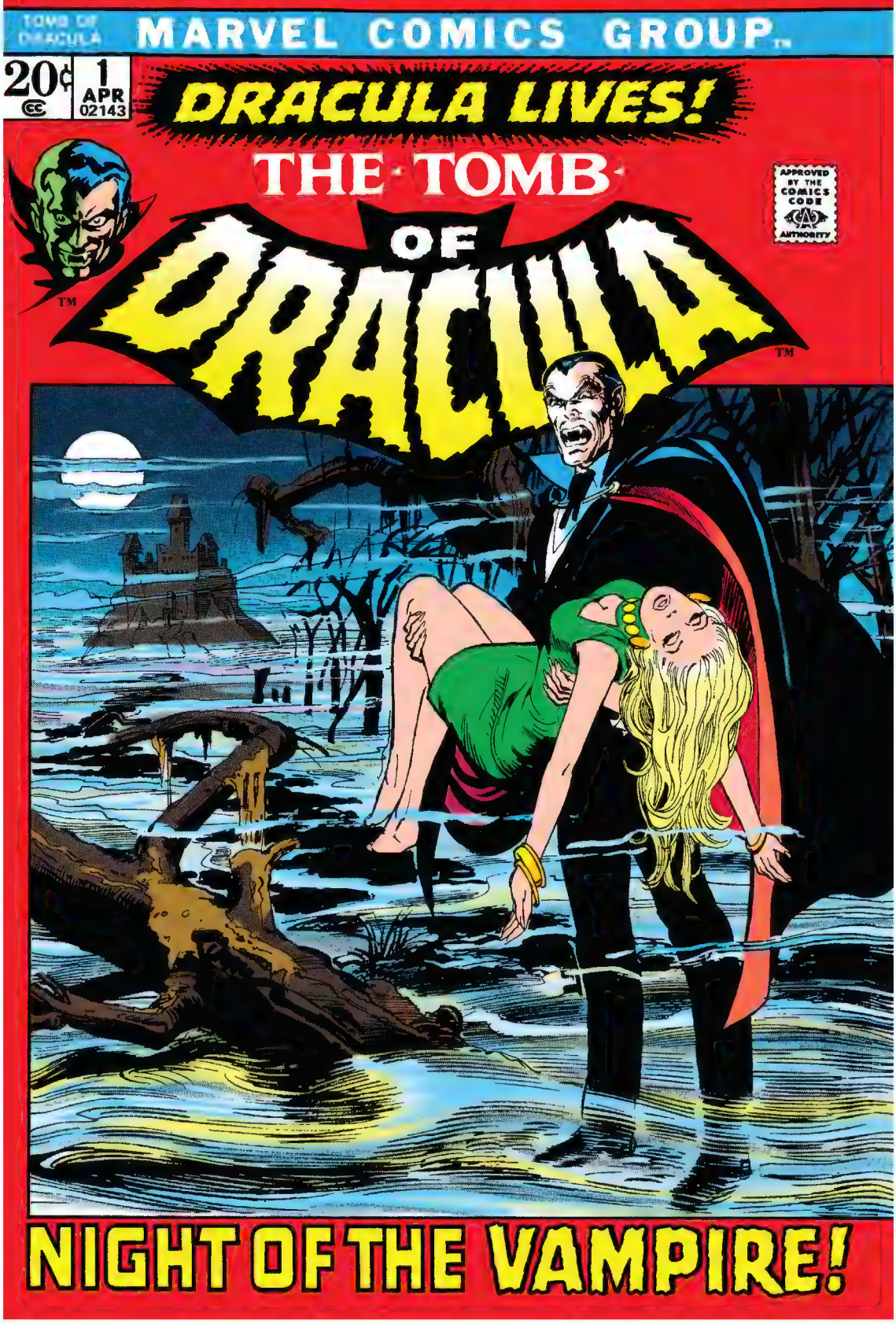
REALLAARGHHH

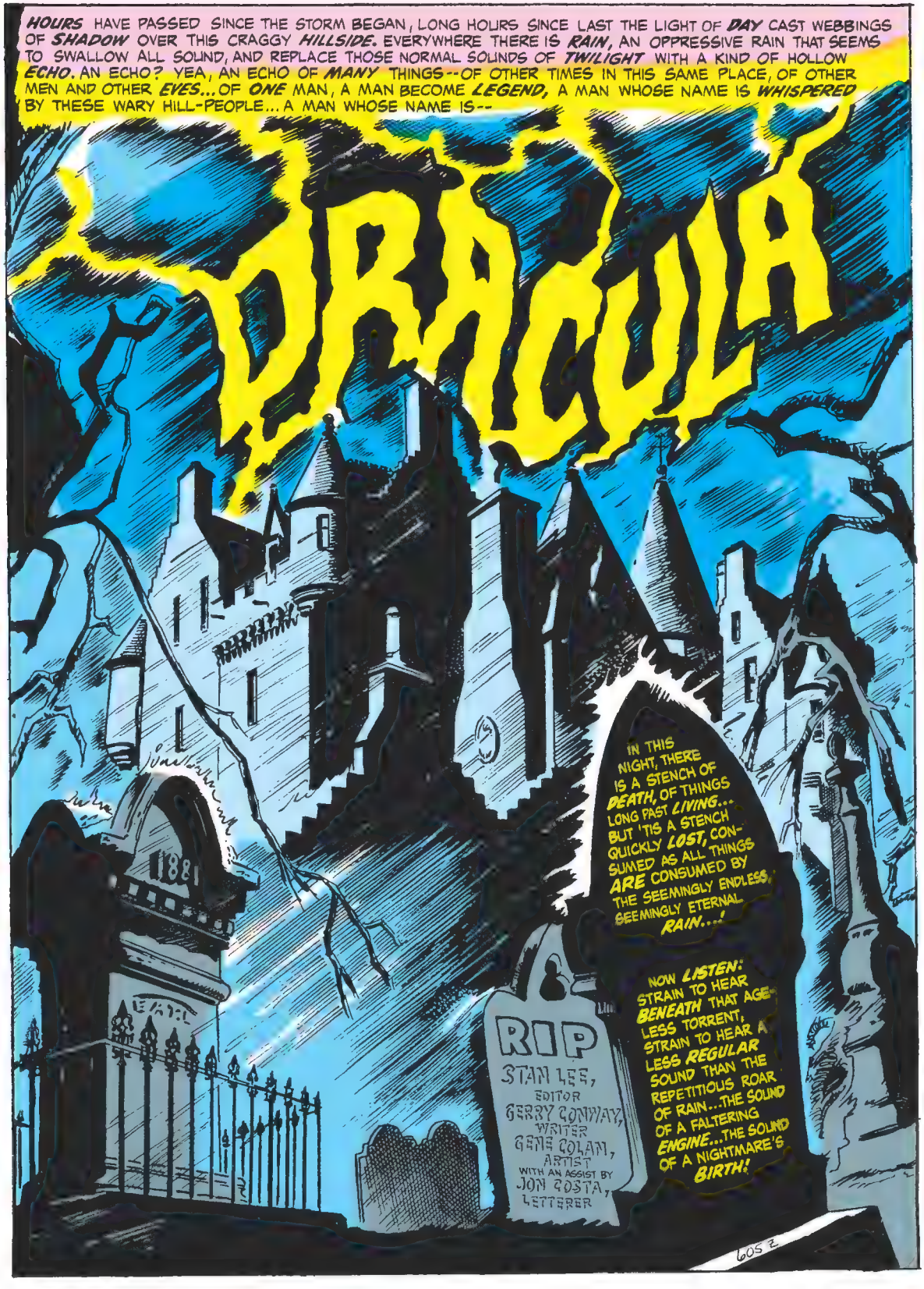

--NO TIME FOR ANY THOUGHT-- EXCEPT THE THOUGHT-- OF DEATH!
OF THAT I KNOW NOTHING. BUT, IS MY EDITED MEMORY A REAL BLACKOUT-- OR SOMETHING I'VE SINCE BLOCKED FROM THOUGHT--
--BECAUSE THE NIGHT-MARE BECAME-- TOO REAL ?


AND WHEN IT WAS DONE, AND I ROSE FROM THE DEAD ONE...I HEARD A VOICE...AND SAW--
--HIM!
I KNOW...HIM... HE SENT THIS ONE...
...GRANT?
HE IS THE ONE...WHO TRULY KILLED THAT WOMAN.
NOW HE IN TURN... MUST PAY!

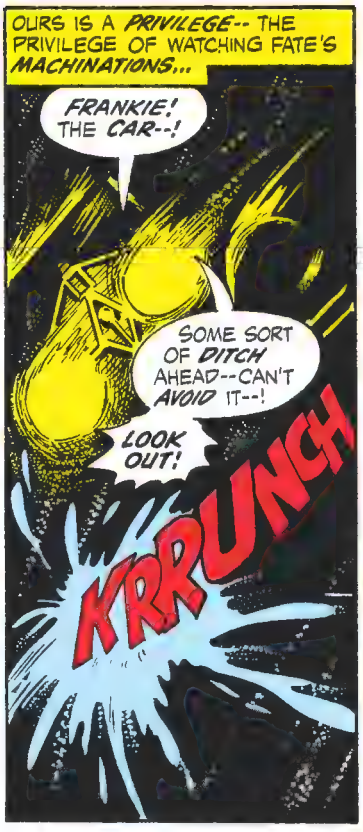
THE BEAST HAD STOLEN MY RATIONAL PLANS--HAD MADE HIS OWN JUDGEMENTS. HOW COULD I BE SURE JUST WHAT PART IN MY MOTHER'S DEATH MY LOVING STEP-FATHER HAD PLAYED?
GRANT, ARE YOU HERE?
THE PART CALLED JACK COULDN'T BE SURE--BUT THE MONSTER THE MOON HAD MADE ME KNEW--OR THOUGHT HE DID--
GRANT, I'VE GOT THAT MONEY... I'VE GOT IT ALL.
TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS--
--EVERY BILL OF IT-- CURSED A BLACKENED RED.
GRANT, ARE YOU THERE?
LAURA DIED TONIGHT. I'M A RICH MAN. DOESN'T THAT MAKE YOU GLAD, GRANT?
DOESN'T IT MAKE YOU... GLAD?
EVEN AS HE SAID IT, MY STEP-FATHER'S VOICE BROKE...AND HE TURNED AWAY. BUT BEFORE I COULD MOVE--
--MY MIND HEARD ANOTHER'S VOICE--A PLEA, MADE JUST THIS SIDE OF DEATH--
"PROMISE ME YOU'LL ...NEVER RAISE YOUR HAND AGAINST HIM... SWEAR TO ME, JACK--!"
AND I HAD--SWORN!
THE MEMORY WAS JUST ENOUGH TO HOLD THE MAN-BEAST BACK--AND IT'S WELL IT DID.
FOR HOW COULD I BE SURE--REALLY SURE THAT PHILIP RUSSELL HAD PLANNED THE CRIME?
--AND MORE--HOW WOULD I EVER LIVE WITH THE MAN I'D BECOME--IF I DISOBEYED MY DYING MOTHER'S FINAL WISH?


OUTSIDE, THE NIGHT WAS COLD, A DRIZZLING RAIN WASHING THROUGH THE WIND-SWEPT AIR OF DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES. FROM THE SHADOWS, I WATCHED HIM CLIMB INTO HIS BLACK SEDAN--
--WATCHED AND WONDERED. FOR ALL THE THINGS I'D SUSPECTED-- WOULD I EVER REALLY BE CERTAIN--?
--AND IF I NEVER WAS--WOULDN'T MY MOTHER'S DEATH--BE ONLY HALF-AVENGED?
HELPLESS--I LOOKED TO THE MOON-- AND CRIED--
AAAAAAAAYYYYYYYY
FOR I'D REALIZED ONE MORE THING--SOMETHING THAT WAS ALREADY DISSOLVING IN ANIMAL RAGE EVEN AS THE THOUGHT THAT HELD IT FORMED.
WHAT COULD REVENGE MATTER--WHAT COULD IT EVER MATTER--
--TO A BOY-- NOW A MAN-- NOW A WOLF!
FINIS?

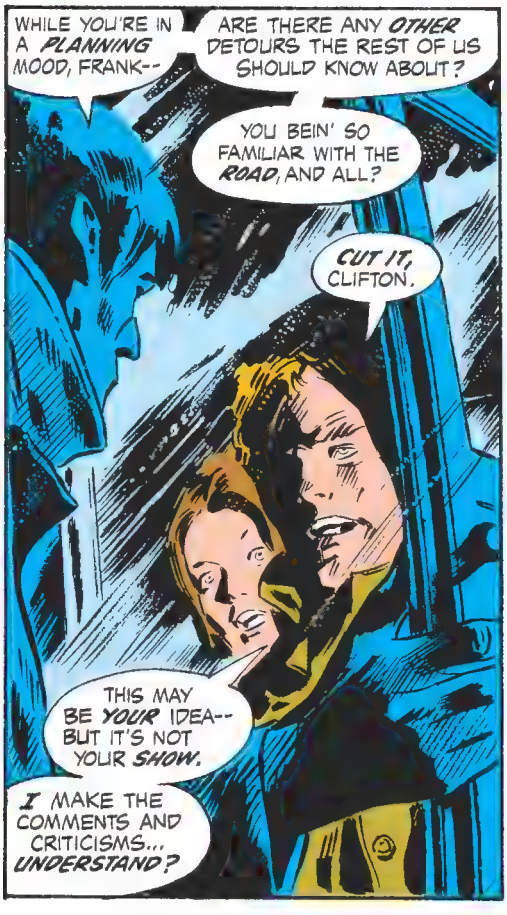

TOMB OF DRACULA
MARVEL COMICS GROUP™
20¢
1
APR
02143
DRACULA LIVES!
THE TOMB OF DRACULA™
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
NIGHT OF THE VAMPIRE!


HOURS HAVE PASSED SINCE THE STORM BEGAN, LONG HOURS SINCE LAST THE LIGHT OF DAY CAST WEBBINGS OF SHADOW OVER THIS CRAGGY HILLSIDE. EVERYWHERE THERE IS RAIN, AN OPPRESSIVE RAIN THAT SEEMS TO SWALLOW ALL SOUND, AND REPLACE THOSE NORMAL SOUNDS OF TWILIGHT WITH A KIND OF HOLLOW ECHO. AN ECHO? YEA, AN ECHO OF MANY THINGS--OF OTHER TIMES IN THIS SAME PLACE, OF OTHER MEN AND OTHER EVES...OF ONE MAN, A MAN BECOME LEGEND, A MAN WHOSE NAME IS WHISPERED BY THESE WARY HILL-PEOPLE... A MAN WHOSE NAME IS--
DRACULA
IN THIS NIGHT, THERE IS A STENCH OF DEATH, OF THINGS LONG PAST LIVING... BUT 'TIS A STENCH QUICKLY LOST, CONSUMED AS ALL THINGS ARE CONSUMED BY THE SEEMINGLY ENDLESS, SEEMINGLY ETERNAL RAIN...!
NOW LISTEN: STRAIN TO HEAR BENEATH THAT AGELESS TORRENT, STRAIN TO HEAR A LESS REGULAR SOUND THAN THE REPETITIOUS ROAR OF RAIN...THE SOUND OF A FALTERING ENGINE...THE SOUND OF A NIGHTMARE'S BIRTH!
1881
RIP
STAN LEE, EDITOR
GERRY CONWAY, WRITER
GENE COLAN, ARTIST
WITH AN ASSIST BY JON COSTA, LETTERER
60S 2

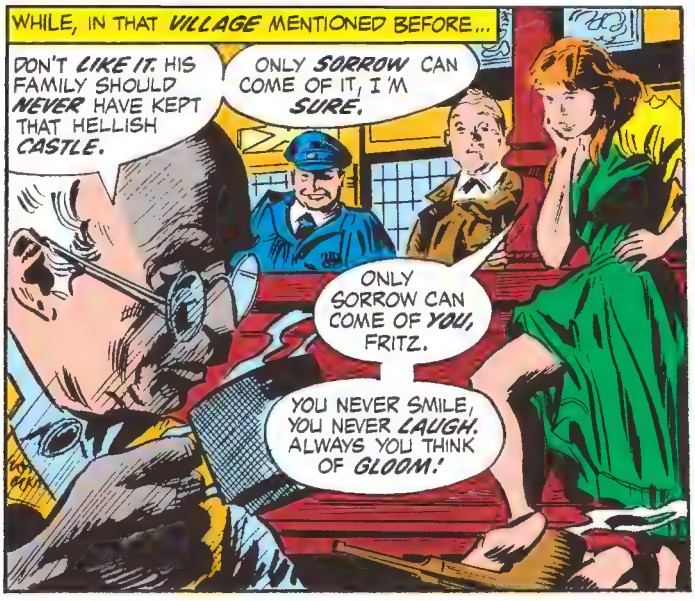
TIME HAS DEPARTED THIS SCENE, WASHED FROM TIRED MINDS BY THE ENDLESS PATTERING UPON THE JEEP'S CANVAS ROOF. FOR THE THREE OF THEM, THERE'S ONLY GRAY--FORMLESS, MOVING GRAY...
PLEASE, FRANK--WE'D BETTER STOP SOMEWHERE, ASK DIRECTIONS.
IT'S BEEN HOURS SINCE WE LEFT THE AIRPORT. I DON'T--
BUT I DO, CLIFTON. YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO TRUST ME.
SOMEHOW...I KNOW THIS ROAD... KNOW I CAN'T GET LOST.
THE CASTLE'S UP AHEAD. A MILE...IT CAN'T BE MORE.


OURS IS A PRIVILEGE-- THE PRIVILEGE OF WATCHING FATE'S MACHINATIONS...
FRANKIE! THE CAR--!
SOME SORT OF DITCH AHEAD--CAN'T AVOID IT--!
LOOK OUT!
KRRUNCH

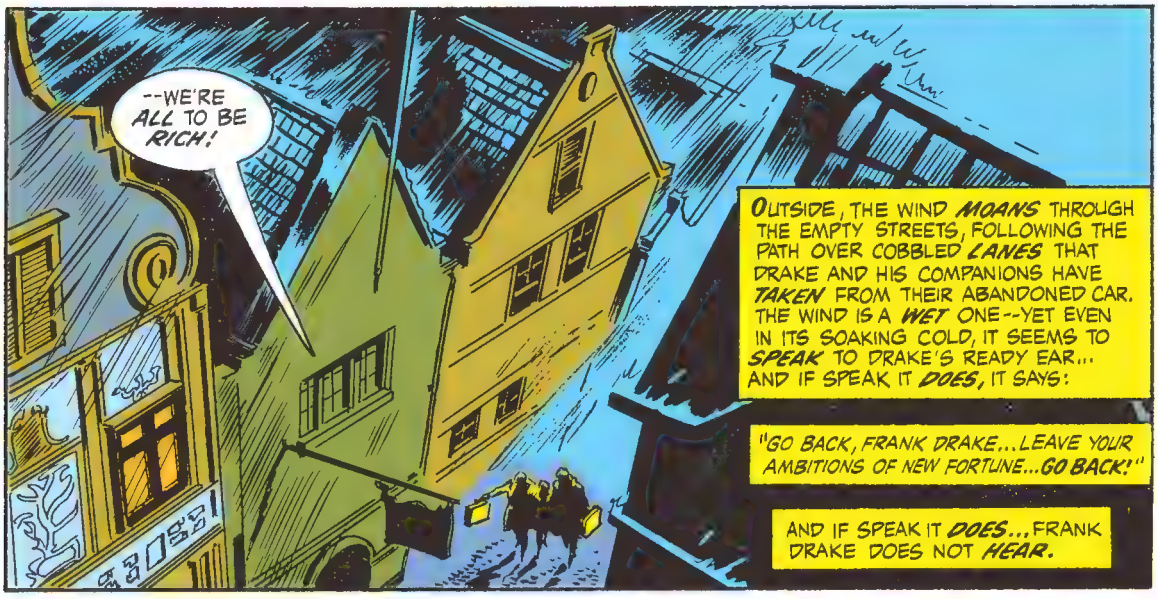
FINE. JUST FINE. SO MUCH FOR RENTED JEEPS.
WE'LL HAVE TO WALK BACK A WAYS--TO THAT VILLAGE WE PASSED.
THINK YOU CAN MAKE IT, JEANIE?
YE-YES, FRANKIE...
FRANK DRAKE GROWS SILENT, CONSIDERING THE TWISTS AND CURVES OF DESTINY THAT HAVE BROUGHT HIM TO THIS MOUNTAIN ROAD, TO THIS TINY COUNTRY. FINALLY, HE SIGHS, AND BEGINS TO MOVE.

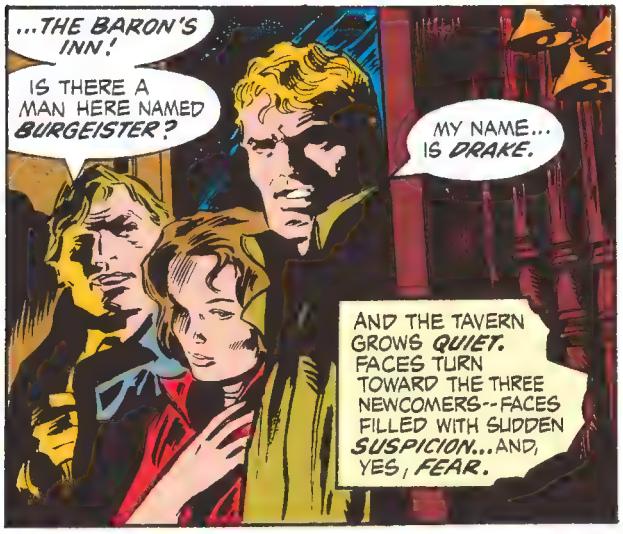

WHILE YOU'RE IN A PLANNING MOOD, FRANK--
ARE THERE ANY OTHER DETOURS THE REST OF US SHOULD KNOW ABOUT?
YOU BEIN' SO FAMILIAR WITH THE ROAD, AND ALL?
CUT IT, CLIFTON.
THIS MAY BE YOUR IDEA--BUT IT'S NOT YOUR SHOW.
I MAKE THE COMMENTS AND CRITICISMS... UNDERSTAND?

SURE, FRANK, SURE. YOU'RE THE BRAIN BOY IN THIS TEAM-UP, RIGHT?
YEAH...YOU'RE THE ONE WHO WANTED TO SELL THE BLASTED CASTLE, REMEMBER? YEAH, REAL BRIGHT, FRANKIE-BOY.
DON'T LET ME SLOW YOU DOWN, LOVER-MAN.
I'M SORRY, JEANIE. EVER SINCE WE LEFT LONDON... CLIFTON'S BEEN ACTING STRANGE.
AND WE BOTH KNOW WHY, DON'T WE, FRANKIE?
IT'S ALL MY FAULT FOR COMING ALONG. I USED TO BE HIS GIRL--
AND HE CAN'T TAKE MY BEING WITH YOU!
DRAKE DOESN'T ANSWER. PAINFULLY, HE KNOWS THAT WHAT SHE SAYS...IS TRUE.


WHILE, IN THAT VILLAGE MENTIONED BEFORE...
DON'T LIKE IT. HIS FAMILY SHOULD NEVER HAVE KEPT THAT HELLISH CASTLE.
ONLY SORROW CAN COME OF IT, I'M SURE.
ONLY SORROW CAN COME OF YOU, FRITZ.
YOU NEVER SMILE, YOU NEVER LAUGH. ALWAYS YOU THINK OF GLOOM!

I LIKE THE SOUND OF THIS FRANK DRAKE'S NAME. PERHAPS HE WILL BRING LIFE TO OUR LITTLE TOWN--
--AS WELL AS LIFE...TO THAT BARREN CASTLE.
HIS LETTER SPOKE OF--OF TOURISTS. AND IF IT MEANS WHAT I THINK--


--WE'RE ALL TO BE RICH!
OUTSIDE, THE WIND MOANS THROUGH THE EMPTY STREETS, FOLLOWING THE PATH OVER COBBLED LANES THAT DRAKE AND HIS COMPANIONS HAVE TAKEN FROM THEIR ABANDONED CAR. THE WIND IS A WET ONE--YET EVEN IN ITS SOAKING COLD, IT SEEMS TO SPEAK TO DRAKE'S READY EAR... AND IF SPEAK IT DOES, IT SAYS:
"GO BACK, FRANK DRAKE...LEAVE YOUR AMBITIONS OF NEW FORTUNE...GO BACK!"
AND IF SPEAK IT DOES...FRANK DRAKE DOES NOT HEAR.


...THE BARON'S INN!
IS THERE A MAN HERE NAMED BURGEISTER?
MY NAME... IS DRAKE.
AND THE TAVERN GROWS QUIET. FACES TURN TOWARD THE THREE NEWCOMERS--FACES FILLED WITH SUDDEN SUSPICION...AND, YES, FEAR.

I AM BURGEISTER, HERR DRAKE.
LET ME WELCOME YOU...TO TRANSYLVANIA!

YOU HAVE A CAR WITH YOU? NO?
THEN I SUPPOSE YOU WISH TRANS-PORTATION TO THE CASTLE?
THAT WOULD BE CONVENIENT, YES.
IS THERE ANYONE HERE WITH A CARRIAGE?
THERE ARE SEVERAL HERE WHO OWN CARRIAGES, HERR DRAKE.
THERE IS NONE WHO WILL TAKE YOU!

DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE AFRAID.
DIDN'T THAT GO OUT WITH BRAM STOKER?
HERR STOKER TOLD THE TRUTH--IN PART.
WE WISH YOU NO HARM...BUT WE WILL NOT AID YOU.

SPEAK FOR YOURSELF, BURGEISTER.
IF THE FARE IS GOOD, HERR DRAKE--?
I'LL MAKE IT WORTH YOUR WHILE, FRIEND.
THEN COME--BEFORE I CHANGE MY MIND.

WATCH OUT FOR OTTO, HERR DRAKE. HIS MIND FILLS ONLY WITH FIGURES--
A WORTHY ENOUGH OCCUPATION, I'M SURE--
...BUT ONE THAT CANNOT BRING YOU TO ANY GOOD.
AND FRITZ--ISN'T IT AMUSING HOW I'VE TAKEN YOUR SIDE?
NEXT I'LL BE GOING TO CHURCH!

AND DRAKE LEAVES SILENTLY, SILENTLY... LEADING HIS FELLOWS TO THE CARRIAGE, HIS MIND WORKING OVER THE BARMAID'S WORDS.

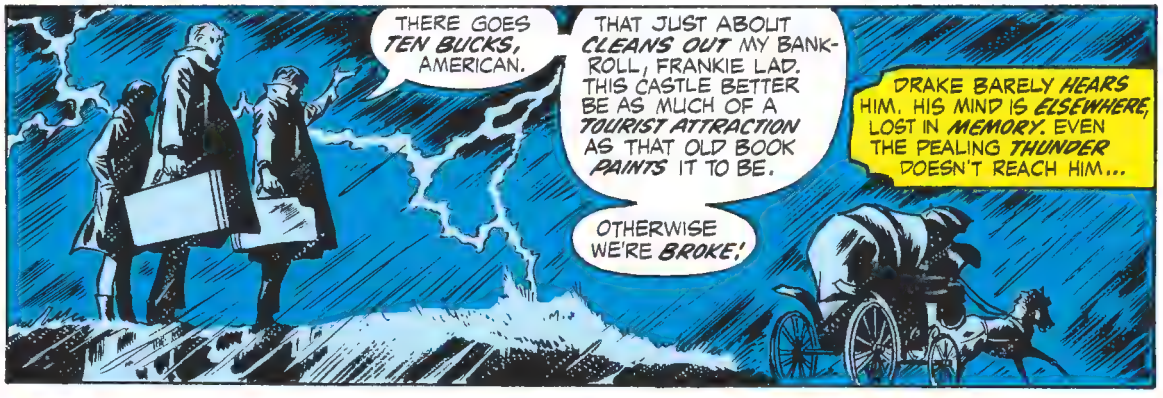
...A SILLY FOOL, THAT GIRL, HERR DRAKE.
HER MOUTH RUNS FULL OF LIES!
DO YOU PEOPLE REALLY BELIEVE IN THE LEGEND... THE LEGEND OF DRACULA?

BELIEVE? THAT IS HARD TO SAY, HERR DRAKE, IT IS FACT THAT THE COUNT EXISTED--BUT THAT HE WAS A VAMPIRE?
I HARDLY GIVE IT CREDENCE, MYSELF...THOUGH THERE ARE MANY THAT DO--
FOR THERE ARE MANY WHO BAR THEIR WINDOWS AT NIGHT, AND SET A WREATH OF WOLF'S-BANE AT THEIR DOOR...
...AND MANY MORE WHO WEAR A BLESSED CRUCIFIX ABOUT THEIR NECKS. RELIGION? PERHAPS.
SOME WOULD CALL IT FEAR!

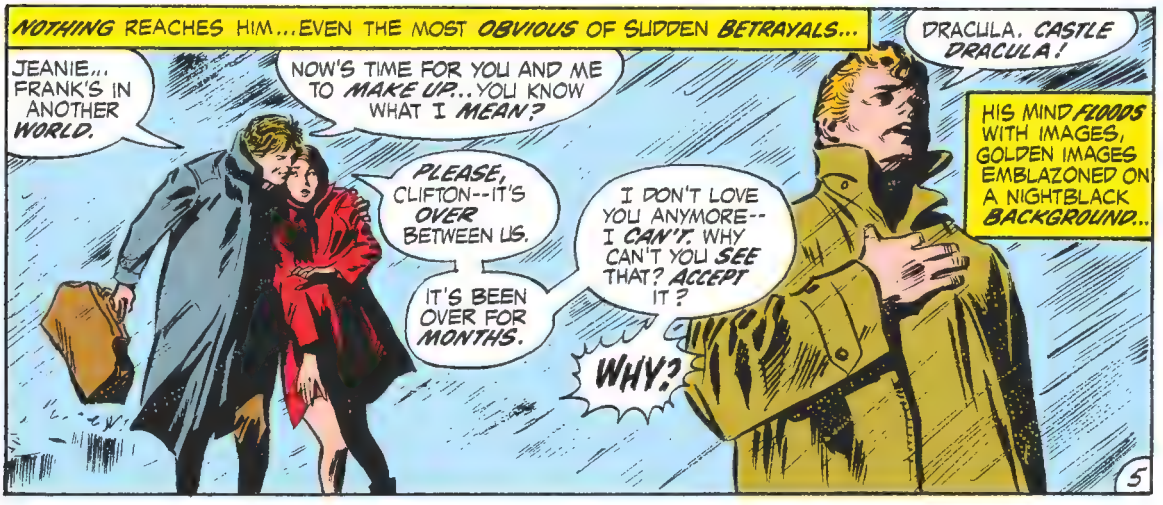
BUT I, SIR? NO, I DON'T BELIEVE. 'TIS ALL THE STUFF OF SUPERSTITION.
STUFF BRAVE MEN GIVE NO HOLD.
NOW, SIR... THIS IS AS FAR AS I GO.
THE CASTLE IS YONDER... BUT A SHORT WALK, AS YOU CAN RIGHTLY SEE.
NO FEAR, OTTO?
TELL ME MORE ABOUT YOUR BRAVERY.
PLEASE, FRANK... LET'S NOT ARGUE WITH HIM.

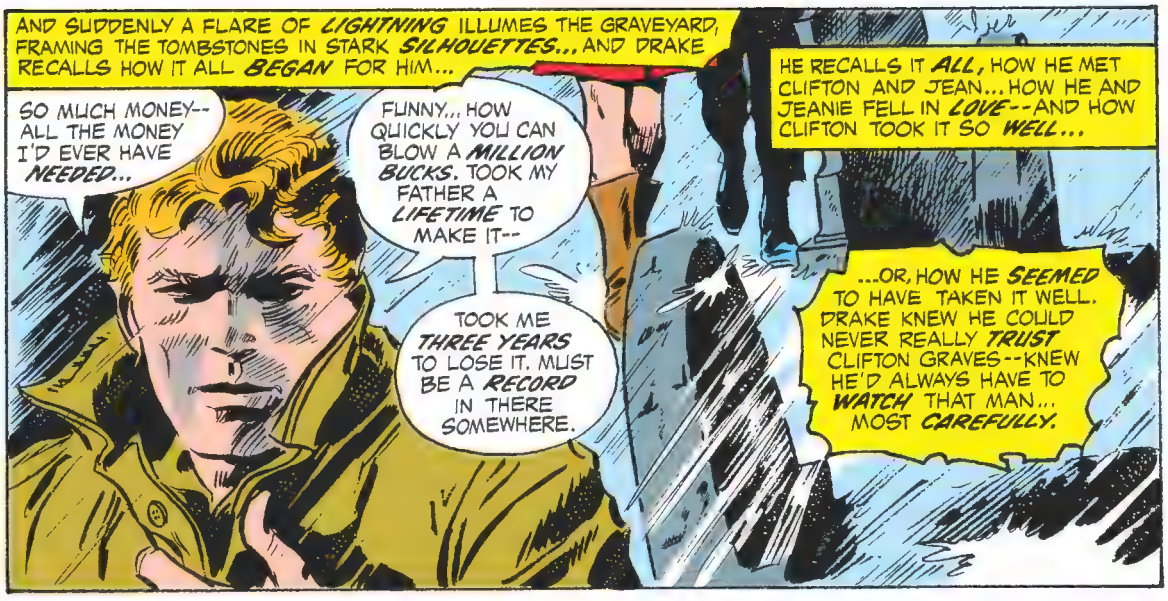
THE GIRL IS RIGHT, SIR. 'TWILL DO YOU NO GOOD.
EVEN A BRAVE MAN KNOWS NOT TO BE A FOOL.
SURE SURE, PAL.
DON'T DO US ANY FAVORS, OKAY, HANDSOME?
PAY HIM, CLIFTON. HE'S TAKEN US THIS FAR, AT LEAST.
I SUPPOSE WE SHOULD BE... GRATEFUL.

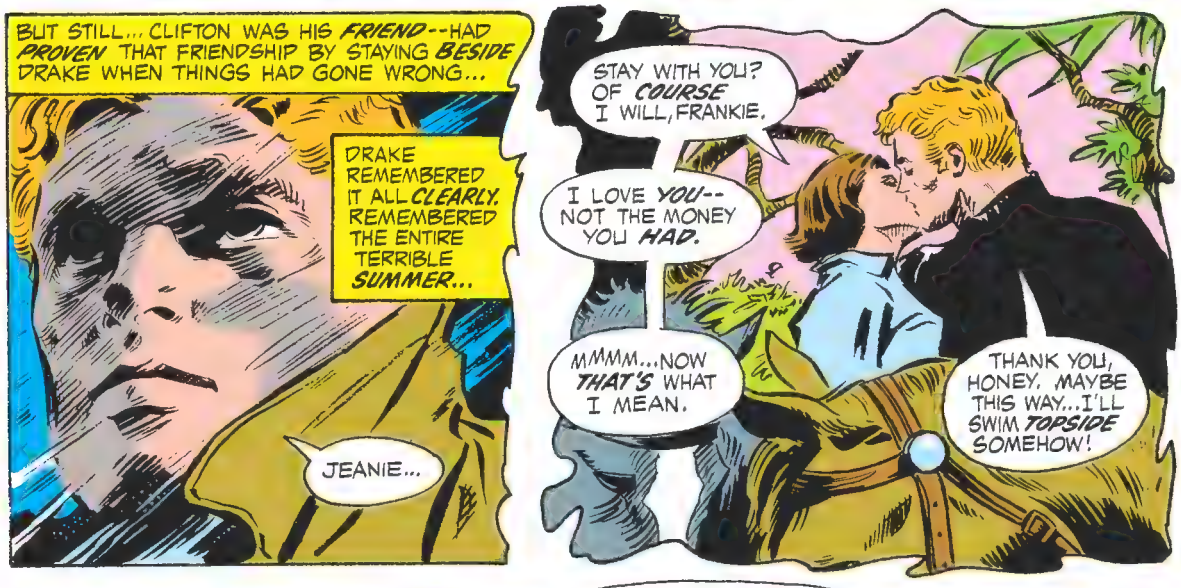
MUD SLOSHES ABOVE THE HEEL OF HIS BOOT, COLD AGAINST HIS LEG. DRAKE BECOMES SLOWLY AWARE OF THE DISCOMFORT HE'S PUT JEAN THROUGH...HE WANTS TO SPEAK TO HER--AND CAN'T.


THERE GOES TEN BUCKS, AMERICAN.
THAT JUST ABOUT CLEANS OUT MY BANKROLL, FRANKIE LAD. THIS CASTLE BETTER BE AS MUCH OF A TOURIST ATTRACTION AS THAT OLD BOOK PAINTS IT TO BE.
OTHERWISE WE'RE BROKE!
DRAKE BARELY HEARS HIM. HIS MIND IS ELSEWHERE, LOST IN MEMORY. EVEN THE PEALING THUNDER DOESN'T REACH HIM...

NOTHING REACHES HIM...EVEN THE MOST OBVIOUS OF SUDDEN BETRAYALS...

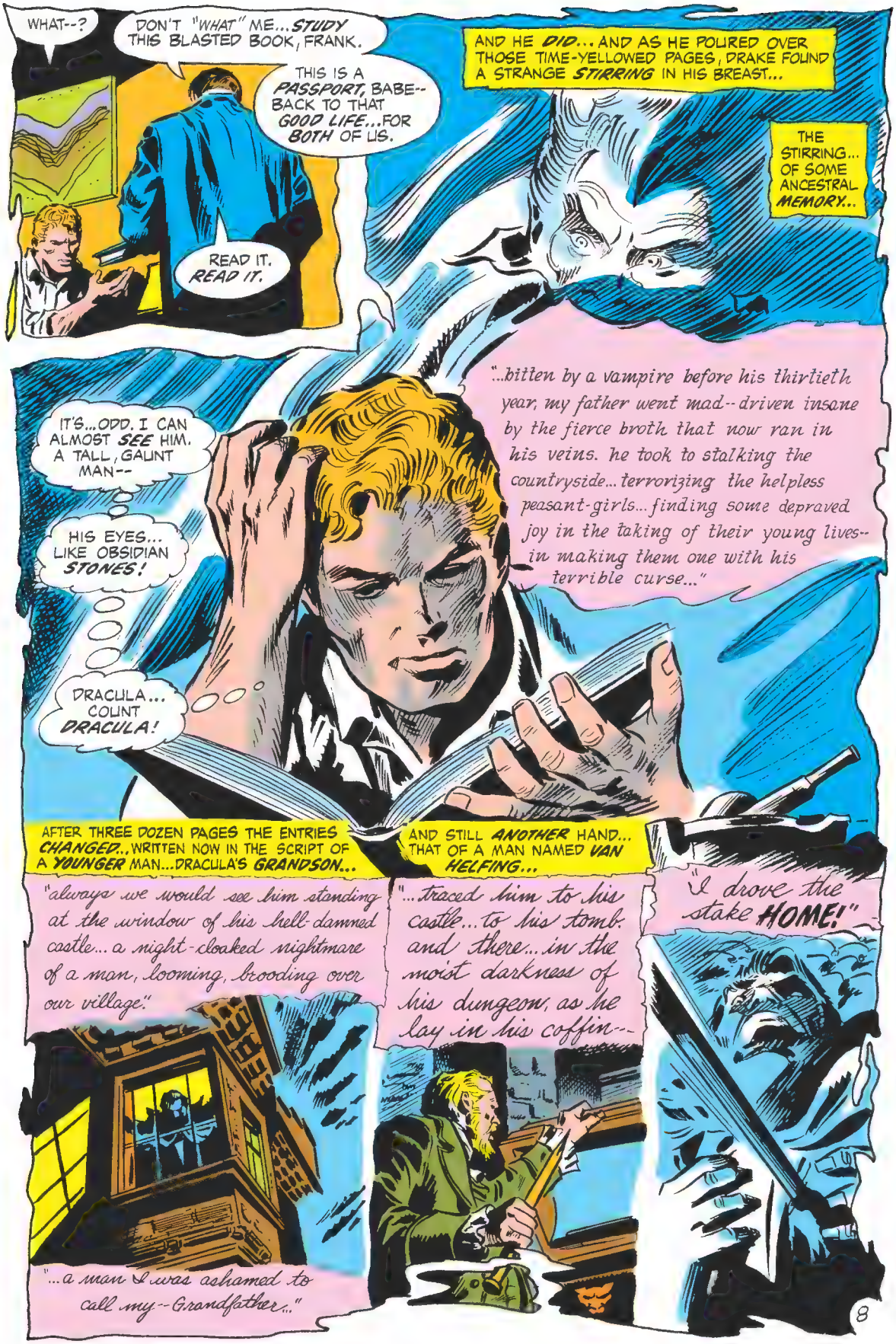

JEANIE... FRANK'S IN ANOTHER WORLD.
NOW'S TIME FOR YOU AND ME TO MAKE UP...YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN?
PLEASE, CLIFTON--IT'S OVER BETWEEN US.
IT'S BEEN OVER FOR MONTHS.
I DON'T LOVE YOU ANYMORE-- I CAN'T. WHY CAN'T YOU SEE THAT? ACCEPT IT?
WHY?
DRACULA. CASTLE DRACULA!
HIS MIND FLOODS WITH IMAGES, GOLDEN IMAGES EMBLAZONED ON A NIGHTBLACK BACKGROUND...

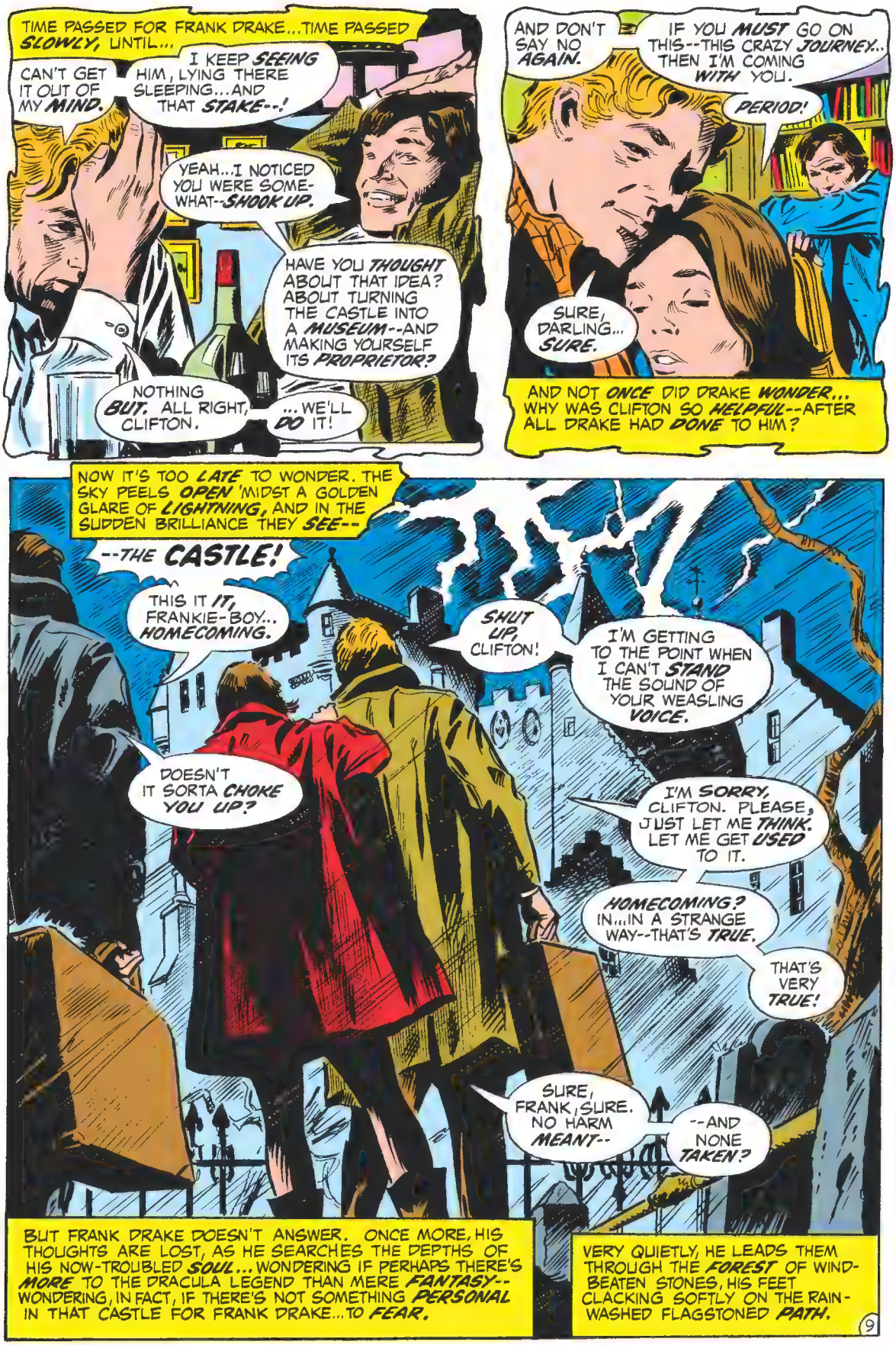

AND SUDDENLY A FLARE OF LIGHTNING ILLUMES THE GRAVEYARD, FRAMING THE TOMBSTONES IN STARK SILHOUETTES... AND DRAKE RECALLS HOW IT ALL BEGAN FOR HIM...
SO MUCH MONEY--ALL THE MONEY I'D EVER HAVE NEEDED...
FUNNY... HOW QUICKLY YOU CAN BLOW A MILLION BUCKS. TOOK MY FATHER A LIFETIME TO MAKE IT--
TOOK ME THREE YEARS TO LOSE IT. MUST BE A RECORD IN THERE SOMEWHERE.
HE RECALLS IT ALL, HOW HE MET CLIFTON AND JEAN... HOW HE AND JEANIE FELL IN LOVE--AND HOW CLIFTON TOOK IT SO WELL...
...OR, HOW HE SEEMED TO HAVE TAKEN IT WELL. DRAKE KNEW HE COULD NEVER REALLY TRUST CLIFTON GRAVES--KNEW HE'D ALWAYS HAVE TO WATCH THAT MAN... MOST CAREFULLY.

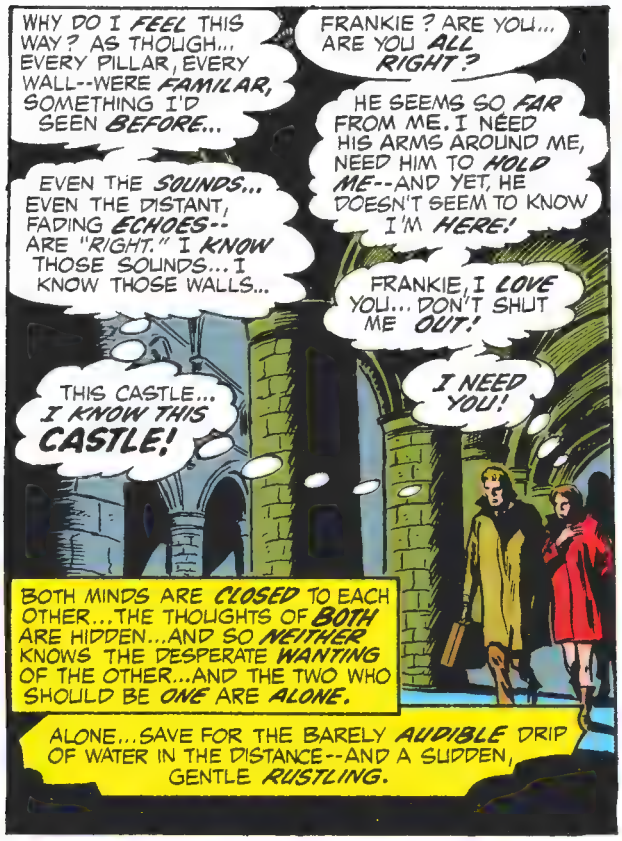

BUT STILL... CLIFTON WAS HIS FRIEND--HAD PROVEN THAT FRIENDSHIP BY STAYING BESIDE DRAKE WHEN THINGS HAD GONE WRONG...
DRAKE REMEMBERED IT ALL CLEARLY. REMEMBERED THE ENTIRE TERRIBLE SUMMER...
JEANIE...
STAY WITH YOU? OF COURSE I WILL, FRANKIE.
I LOVE YOU--NOT THE MONEY YOU HAD.
MMMM...NOW THAT'S WHAT I MEAN.
THANK YOU, HONEY. MAYBE THIS WAY... I'LL SWIM TOPSIDE SOMEHOW!

AND MAYBE HE WOULD HAVE--IF HE'D HAD A LITTLE HELP FROM HIS "FRIENDS"...
A LOAN? SORRY, FRANK... BUT YOU HAVE TO FACE IT...
YOU'RE JUST A BAD CREDIT RISK.
EVEN BETWEEN FRIENDS, DANNY? EVEN AFTER ALL I DID FOR YOU?
PAUL--?
NO TIME TO TALK, OLD PAL!
SEE YOU AT THE CLUB FRIDAY... MAYBE.
FRIENDSHIP DOESN'T PAY BACK INTEREST, FRANKIE.
I'M SORRY.
SURE, PAUL. WHAT'RE FRIENDS FOR?
WHAT'RE FRIENDS FOR.

...REAL TOUGH, FRANK--BUT I COULD'A TOLD YOU IT'D HAPPEN.
SOME PEOPLE JUST DON'T HACK IT WHEN YOU'RE DOWN AND OUT.
BUT YOU KINDA KNOW THAT, DON'T YOU?
KNOW IT? CLIFTON, I'VE LIVED IT.
IT'S REALLY SORT OF...OF FUNNY, IN A WAY.
A MONTH AGO THOSE CLODS CLUSTERED AROUND ME LIKE PIGEONS AROUND A HANDFUL OF BREAD CRUMBS.
NOW...I CAN'T EVEN GET A LOAN--BECAUSE ALL I'VE GOT FOR COLLATERAL IS AN OLD CASTLE!
FUNNY, YOU KNOW? REAL FUNNY.
WELL, LOOK, I'VE GOTTA BE--
CASTLE?
SURE. IT'S BEEN PASSED DOWN THROUGH GENERATIONS, SINCE WE CHANGED OUR NAME TO DRAKE AND LEFT THE OLD COUNTRY.
HOLD IT, FRANK. TELL ME MORE ABOUT THIS, BABE.
DAD TRIED TO SELL THE BLASTED THING... SOMEHOW COULDN'T FIND A BUYER.
MAYBE HE DIDN'T TRY AS HARD AS I'M GOING TO.
GOT A BOOK ON IT, HERE. A DIARY OF SORTS.
HEY--YOU NEVER KNEW, DID YOU? I NEVER TOLD YOU...
WELL, READY YOURSELF, CLIFTON--
THE FAMILY NAME USED TO BE--DRACULA!
LIKE IN THE MOVIES? ARE YOU FOR REAL?
LIKE IT OR NOT--YES.
FANTASTIC. ACCORDING TO THIS, THAT DUDE DRACULA REALLY DID EXIST--
AND YOU, FRIEND... ARE A DIRECT DESCENDANT!
YOU KNOW WHAT THIS MEANS?
IT MEANS I'VE GOT A CASTLE IN TRANSYLVANIA I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH.
BIG DEAL.
WRONG, FRIEND. IT MEANS YOU'VE GOT A GOLD MINE.
READY-MADE TOURIST INDUSTRY.
DIG IT: A DIRECT LINK WITH THE ORIGINAL COUNT DRACULA--AND THE CASTLE BUILT BY THE COUNT HIMSELF.
DRAKE--OR DRACULA--YOU'RE ON THE WAY BACK IN!

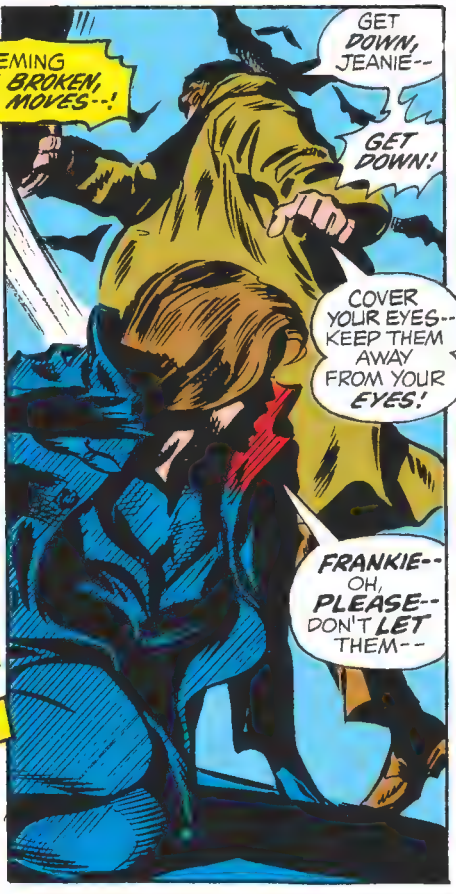

WHAT--?
DON'T "WHAT" ME... STUDY THIS BLASTED BOOK, FRANK.
THIS IS A PASSPORT, BABE-- BACK TO THAT GOOD LIFE... FOR BOTH OF US.
READ IT. READ IT.
AND HE DID... AND AS HE POURED OVER THOSE TIME-YELLOWED PAGES, DRAKE FOUND A STRANGE STIRRING IN HIS BREAST...
THE STIRRING... OF SOME ANCESTRAL MEMORY...
IT'S... ODD. I CAN ALMOST SEE HIM. A TALL, GAUNT MAN--
HIS EYES... LIKE OBSIDIAN STONES!
DRACULA... COUNT DRACULA!
"...bitten by a vampire before his thirtieth year, my father went mad--driven insane by the fierce broth that now ran in his veins. he took to stalking the countryside... terrorizing the helpless peasant-girls... finding some depraved joy in the taking of their young lives-- in making them one with his terrible curse..."
AFTER THREE DOZEN PAGES THE ENTRIES CHANGED... WRITTEN NOW IN THE SCRIPT OF A YOUNGER MAN... DRACULA'S GRANDSON...
AND STILL ANOTHER HAND... THAT OF A MAN NAMED VAN HELFING...
"always we would see him standing at the window of his hell-damned castle... a night-cloaked nightmare of a man, looming, brooding over our village."
"...traced him to his castle... to his tomb. and there... in the moist darkness of his dungeon, as he lay in his coffin--
"I drove the stake HOME!"
"...a man I was ashamed to call my--Grandfather..."
8

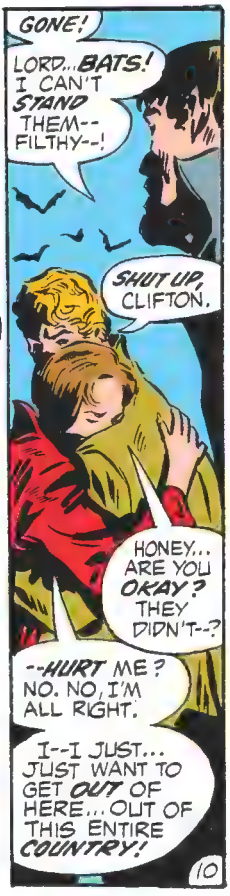

TIME PASSED FOR FRANK DRAKE...TIME PASSED SLOWLY, UNTIL...
CAN'T GET IT OUT OF MY MIND.
I KEEP SEEING HIM, LYING THERE SLEEPING...AND THAT STAKE--!
YEAH...I NOTICED YOU WERE SOMEWHAT--SHOOK UP.
HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT THAT IDEA? ABOUT TURNING THE CASTLE INTO A MUSEUM--AND MAKING YOURSELF ITS PROPRIETOR?
NOTHING BUT. ALL RIGHT, CLIFTON.
...WE'LL DO IT!
AND DON'T SAY NO AGAIN.
IF YOU MUST GO ON THIS--THIS CRAZY JOURNEY.. THEN I'M COMING WITH YOU.
PERIOD!
SURE, DARLING... SURE.
AND NOT ONCE DID DRAKE WONDER... WHY WAS CLIFTON SO HELPFUL--AFTER ALL DRAKE HAD DONE TO HIM?
NOW IT'S TOO LATE TO WONDER. THE SKY PEELS OPEN 'MIDST A GOLDEN GLARE OF LIGHTNING, AND IN THE SUDDEN BRILLIANCE THEY SEE--
--THE CASTLE!
THIS IT IT, FRANKIE-BOY.. HOMECOMING.
SHUT UP, CLIFTON!
I'M GETTING TO THE POINT WHEN I CAN'T STAND THE SOUND OF YOUR WEASLING VOICE.
DOESN'T IT SORTA CHOKE YOU UP?
I'M SORRY, CLIFTON. PLEASE, JUST LET ME THINK. LET ME GET USED TO IT.
HOMECOMING? IN...IN A STRANGE WAY--THAT'S TRUE.
THAT'S VERY TRUE!
SURE, FRANK, SURE. NO HARM MEANT--
--AND NONE TAKEN?
BUT FRANK DRAKE DOESN'T ANSWER. ONCE MORE, HIS THOUGHTS ARE LOST, AS HE SEARCHES THE DEPTHS OF HIS NOW-TROUBLED SOUL...WONDERING IF PERHAPS THERE'S MORE TO THE DRACULA LEGEND THAN MERE FANTASY--WONDERING, IN FACT, IF THERE'S NOT SOMETHING PERSONAL IN THAT CASTLE FOR FRANK DRAKE...TO FEAR.
VERY QUIETLY, HE LEADS THEM THROUGH THE FOREST OF WIND-BEATEN STONES, HIS FEET CLACKING SOFTLY ON THE RAIN-WASHED FLAGSTONED PATH.


WHY DO I FEEL THIS WAY? AS THOUGH... EVERY PILLAR, EVERY WALL--WERE FAMILAR, SOMETHING I'D SEEN BEFORE...
FRANKIE? ARE YOU... ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
HE SEEMS SO FAR FROM ME. I NEED HIS ARMS AROUND ME, NEED HIM TO HOLD ME--AND YET, HE DOESN'T SEEM TO KNOW I'M HERE!
EVEN THE SOUNDS... EVEN THE DISTANT, FADING ECHOES-- ARE "RIGHT." I KNOW THOSE SOUNDS... I KNOW THOSE WALLS...
FRANKIE, I LOVE YOU... DON'T SHUT ME OUT!
I NEED YOU!
THIS CASTLE... I KNOW THIS CASTLE!
BOTH MINDS ARE CLOSED TO EACH OTHER...THE THOUGHTS OF BOTH ARE HIDDEN...AND SO NEITHER KNOWS THE DESPERATE WANTING OF THE OTHER...AND THE TWO WHO SHOULD BE ONE ARE ALONE.
ALONE...SAVE FOR THE BARELY AUDIBLE DRIP OF WATER IN THE DISTANCE--AND A SUDDEN, GENTLE RUSTLING.

SOFTLY, AT FIRST, THAN WITH INCREASING LOUDNESS, THAT RUSTLING BUILDS... SOUNDING LIKE THE CRINKLING OF AUTUMN LEAVES, THEN LIKE SOMETHING MORE--
SOMETHING LEATHERY-- SOMETHING QUITE POWERFUL... SOMETHING DEADLY!
FRANKIE? DO--DO YOU HEAR ANYTHING?
FRANKIE? THAT SOUND...
IT SOUNDS LIKE--

--BATS!
EEEiiEEE

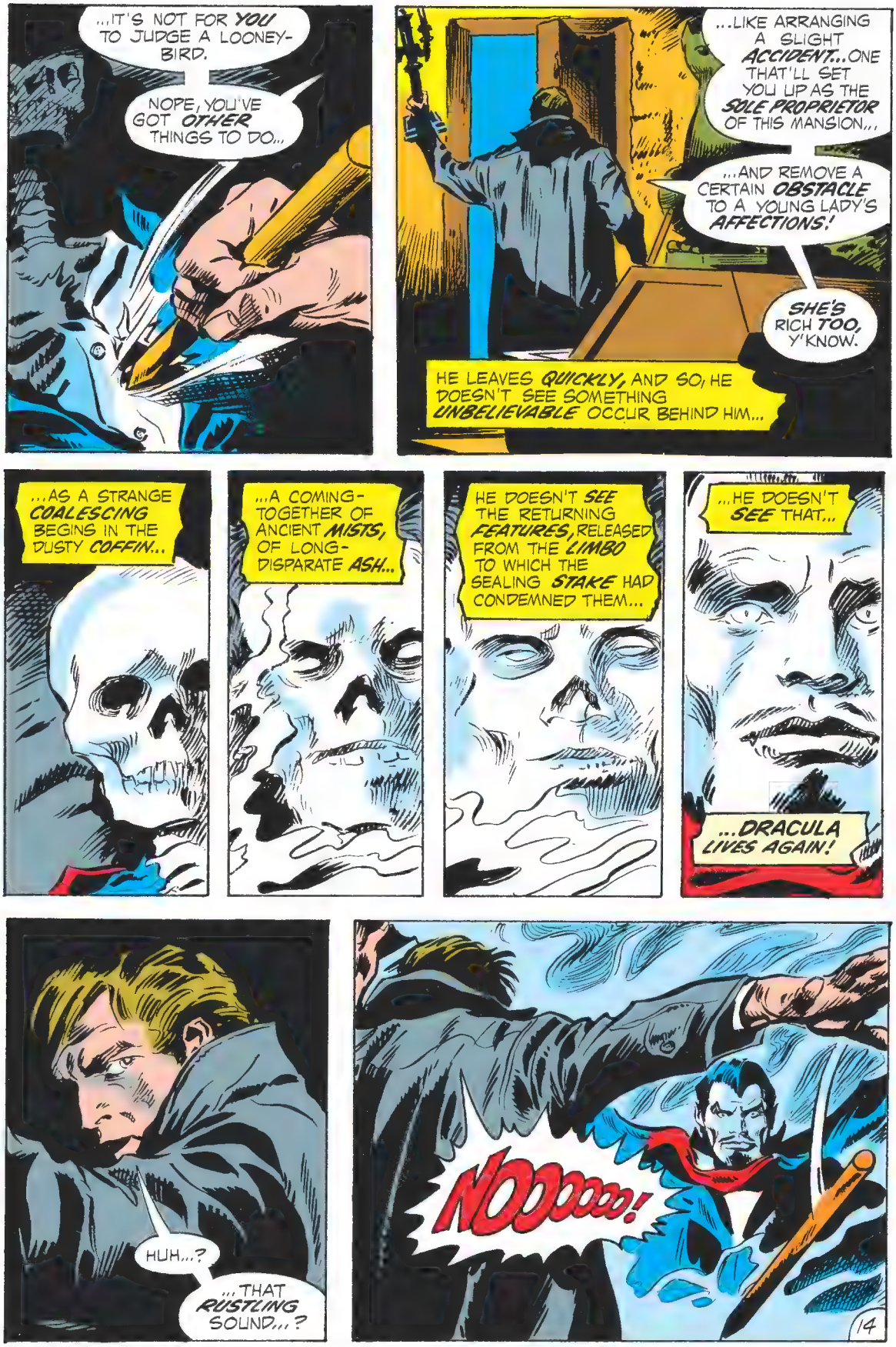

HIS SEEMING TRANCE BROKEN, DRAKE MOVES--!
GET DOWN, JEANIE--
GET DOWN!
COVER YOUR EYES-- KEEP THEM AWAY FROM YOUR EYES!
FRANKIE-- OH, PLEASE-- DON'T LET THEM--


GONE!
LORD...BATS! I CAN'T STAND THEM-- FILTHY--!
SHUT UP, CLIFTON.
HONEY... ARE YOU OKAY? THEY DIDN'T--?
--HURT ME? NO. NO, I'M ALL RIGHT.
I--I JUST... JUST WANT TO GET OUT OF HERE...OUT OF THIS ENTIRE COUNTRY!

SHE STEPS AWAY FROM HIM, MOVING INTO A POOL OF SOFT YELLOW LIGHT, HER THOUGHTS RACING...
I...I WISH I NEVER HEARD OF CASTLE DRACULA,,, OR OF THIS MAD COUNTRY.
EVERYTHING SEEMS STRANGER HERE,,, EVEN THE THINGS I THOUGHT I USED TO KNOW...
EVEN FRANKIE.
WHEN HE GAVE ME THIS SILVER COMPACT, IT WAS AS THOUGH HE'D GIVEN ME ALL HE OWNED.
NOW,,, HE'S CHANGED IN A WAY,,,
I DON'T KNOW HIM ANYMORE!
AND EVEN AS THE TRIO SEPARATES...
...ONE OF THEM MAKES A MOVE ON HIS OWN!
LORD, WHAT A PAIR. HOW COULD I EVER HAVE FALLEN FOR THAT DUMB BROAD?
WELL, SHE'S GOT ANOTHER GUESS COMIN'!
THINKS SHE CAN COOL THINGS OFF JUST LIKE THAT, HUH?
...I'VE BEEN PLANNIN' THIS WHOLE DEAL EVER SINCE I FIRST SAW THAT BOOK, AN' I'M NOT--
CRUN..
--HOLY CRUD!
CHHH
THE FLOOR'S GIVING AWAY! I'M FALLLLLLLINNNG!

OVER! AS QUICKLY AS IT BEGAN, THE FALL ENDS SHORT FEET BELOW, IN A WELL OF FETID DARKNESS...
CRIPES...LUCKY I DIDN'T SNAP MY LEG.
WHERE THE HECK AM I, ANYWAY? DEEDS DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING 'BOUT A DUNGEON...!
WHOA, CLIFF OLD BOY... HANG IN THERE A SECOND.
LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE FOUND THE PROVERBIAL POT AT THE END OF THE RAINBOW.
'LESS I MISS MY GUESS, THIS HERE'S THE TOMB.
...IN WHICH CASE, MISTER GRAVES, YOU'RE GONNA CASH IN EVEN BETTER'N YOU EXPECTED.
THAT FOOL FRANKIE...
COUNT DRACU
IT'LL SERVE 'IM RIGHT WHEN I TAKE THE GIRL, THE CASTLE, AND HIS CRUMMY LIFE. I--
WUZZAT?
FAN-TASTIC! IT'S THE OLD BOY'S CRYPT!
AND THEN, SUDDENLY, THE DREAMS BEGIN TO CRUMBLE...
...AS CLIFTON'S HAND BRUSHES THE BRONZE BAT EMBLEM...
THUMP
...AND THE STONE WALL MOVES!
WHEEE--O! SOME SORTA HINGES MOVE THIS THING--
--IT'S LIKE A BARGAIN BASEMENT HORROR HOUSE.
NOW LET'S JUST SEE WHAT OL' CLIFTON CAN FIND INSIDE...!

HIS FOOTSTEPS ARE SOFT AND HESITANT, AND HE GROPES BEFORE HIMSELF IN THE PITCH BLACKNESS...
...THEN HIS OUTSTRETCHED HAND TOUCHES A COBWEBBED CANDELABRUM...HE STRIKES ANOTHER MATCH...
...AND THE ROOM IS LIT!
CAREFUL, CLIFFY... THIS BABE LOOKS LIKE THE REAL McCOY!
...AND IF IT TRULY IS, THEN YOUR DAYS OF SOCIAL BUMMING ARE OVER...
...'CAUSE THERE'S ONLY ONE CAT WHO CAN BE INSIDE...
...DRACULA!
THAT SEALS IT, MR. GRAVES. HE'S GOT THE LEGENDARY STAKE...THE WHOLE BIT.
THE POOR MAD FOOL. MUST'VE BEEN REALLY WHACKO TO CONVINCE ALL THOSE CLOWNS HE WAS A VAMPIRE...
...A REAL MEGALOMANIAC. WELLLLL, CLIFF...

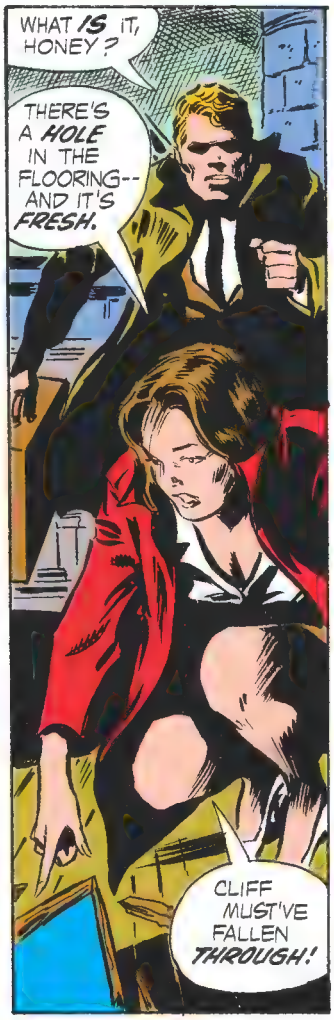

...IT'S NOT FOR YOU TO JUDGE A LOONEY-BIRD.
NOPE, YOU'VE GOT OTHER THINGS TO DO...
...LIKE ARRANGING A SLIGHT ACCIDENT...ONE THAT'LL SET YOU UP AS THE SOLE PROPRIETOR OF THIS MANSION...
...AND REMOVE A CERTAIN OBSTACLE TO A YOUNG LADY'S AFFECTIONS!
SHE'S RICH TOO, Y'KNOW.
HE LEAVES QUICKLY, AND SO, HE DOESN'T SEE SOMETHING UNBELIEVABLE OCCUR BEHIND HIM...
...AS A STRANGE COALESCING BEGINS IN THE DUSTY COFFIN...
...A COMING-TOGETHER OF ANCIENT MISTS, OF LONG-DISPARATE ASH...
HE DOESN'T SEE THE RETURNING FEATURES, RELEASED FROM THE LIMBO TO WHICH THE SEALING STAKE HAD CONDEMNED THEM...
...HE DOESN'T SEE THAT...
...DRACULA LIVES AGAIN!
HUH...?
...THAT RUSTLING SOUND...?
NOOOOO!

THE YEARS HAVE BEEN LONG, AND I AM WEARY OF THEM.
I YEARNED FOR THOSE THINGS FOR WHICH ONCE I LIVED...THE CLOUDS ACROSS A GLOWING MOON...THE BAYING OF NIGHT'S CHILDREN...
...AND MOST OF ALL, I YEARN FOR THAT MOST PLEASING TASTE...
...THE SWEET NECTAR OF LIFE ITSELF!
HIS MIND SHATTERED WITH BLISTERING FEAR, CLIFTON STRIKES OUT BLINDLY--
--THE GUN HE SMUGGLED THROUGH CUSTOMS BARKING OUT WILDLY, LIKE CHAIN LIGHTNING--
--BUT TO NO EFFECT!
CLIFTON'S WORDS ARE LOST IN FRUSTRATED SOBBING, AND THEN THE SLEEK, BLACK-HAIRED MAN STEPS FORWARD...
...AND STRIKES!
I'VE NO TIME FOR STRUGGLING...
...AND SO, YOU WILL JOIN THE OTHERS FAR BELOW...
...WHERE YOU WILL WAIT, WITH THEM, FOR THAT MOMENT...
AAAAA
15

...WHEN I SUMMON YOU...EH?
IT APPEARS MY CASTLE IS NO LONGER DESERTED. I HEAR VOICES FROM THE FLOORS ABOVE...

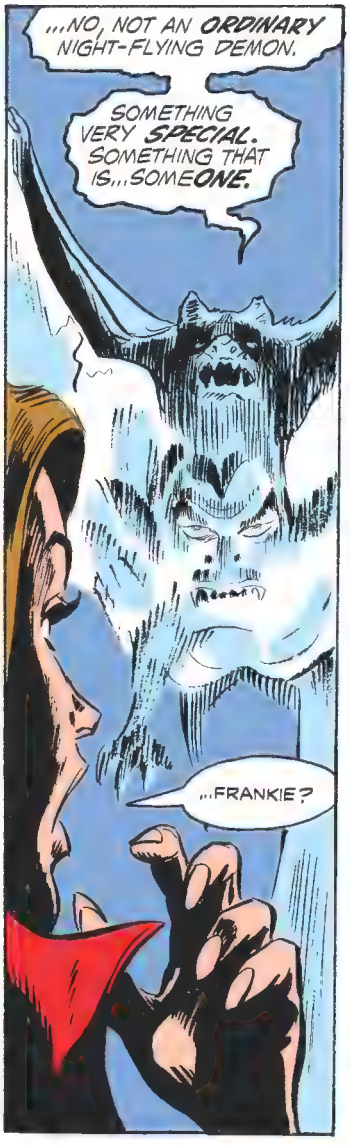
...AND ONE OF THE VOICES... IS A WOMAN'S.

...ARE YOU SURE, JEANIE?
DON'T BE SILLY, FRANKIE... OF COURSE I AM.
CLIFTON CAME DOWN THIS WAY. I SAW HIM RUNNING... WAIT!

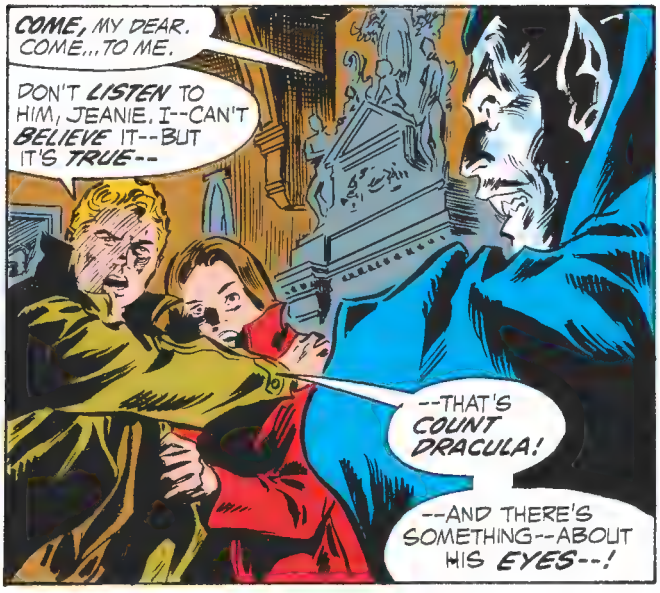

WHAT IS IT, HONEY?
THERE'S A HOLE IN THE FLOORING-- AND IT'S FRESH.
CLIFF MUST'VE FALLEN THROUGH!

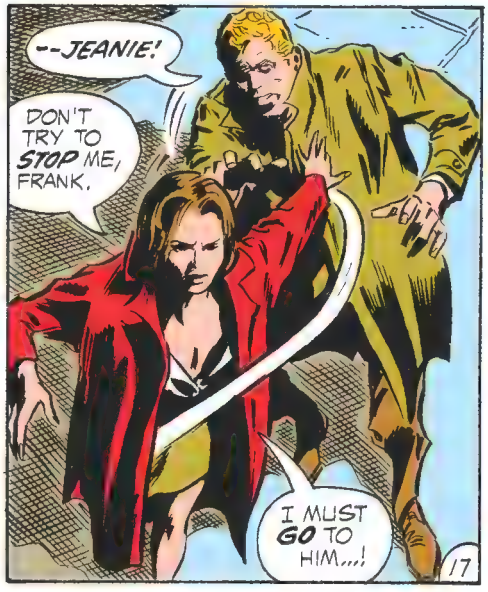
NOW, JEANIE, WE CAN'T BE CERTAIN OF THAT YET.
YOU'D BETTER COME AWAY FROM-- NO!
FRANKIE, IT'S A BAT! KEEP IT AWAY, FRANKIE-- KEEP IT AWAY!
16

HE MAY FIND THAT DIFFICULT, MY DEAR WOMAN...
...FOR, THIS IS NOT JUST ANY BAT...


...NO, NOT AN ORDINARY NIGHT-FLYING DEMON.
SOMETHING VERY SPECIAL. SOMETHING THAT IS...SOMEONE.
...FRANKIE?

SOMEONE WHO IS... DRACULA.
THE MOON-LIGHT SEEMS TO CATCH IN THE POOLS OF HIS EYES, AND TO FLICKER AND DANCE, TWISTING IN THE ANCIENT SHADOWS, AS...

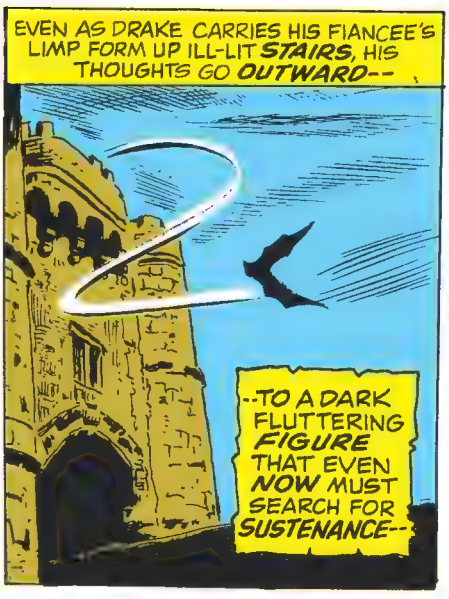

COME, MY DEAR. COME...TO ME.
DON'T LISTEN TO HIM, JEANIE. I--CAN'T BELIEVE IT--BUT IT'S TRUE--
--THAT'S COUNT DRACULA!
--AND THERE'S SOMETHING--ABOUT HIS EYES--!

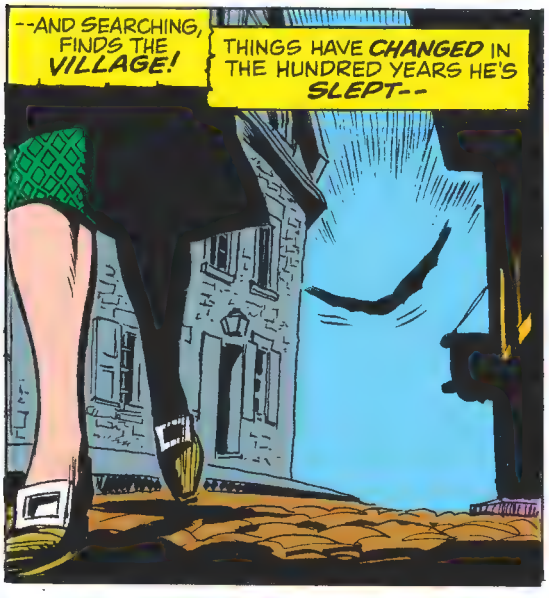

--JEANIE!
DON'T TRY TO STOP ME, FRANK.
I MUST GO TO HIM...!

NO!
HE'S MANAGED TO HYPNOTIZE YOU IN SOME WAY--WITH THOSE DAMNABLE EYES OF HIS!
IT'S JUST LIKE THEY CLAIMED IN THE LEGENDS! ALL THOSE INSANE STORIES WEREN'T LIES!
THERE ARE VAMPIRES--
--AND, LORD HELP US, ONE OF THEM'S ALIVE!
BUT MAYBE WE'VE GOT A CHANCE. THOSE TALES ABOUT SILVER...!
YOU ARE A CLEVER MAN, INTRUDER. THAT SILVER COMPACT BETRAYS ME.
I CANNOT REMAIN...
BUT THIS I PROMISE YOU, FOUL DAYLIGHTER...
...DRACULA IS NOT SO EASILY DISPATCHED...
...FOR LONG.
18

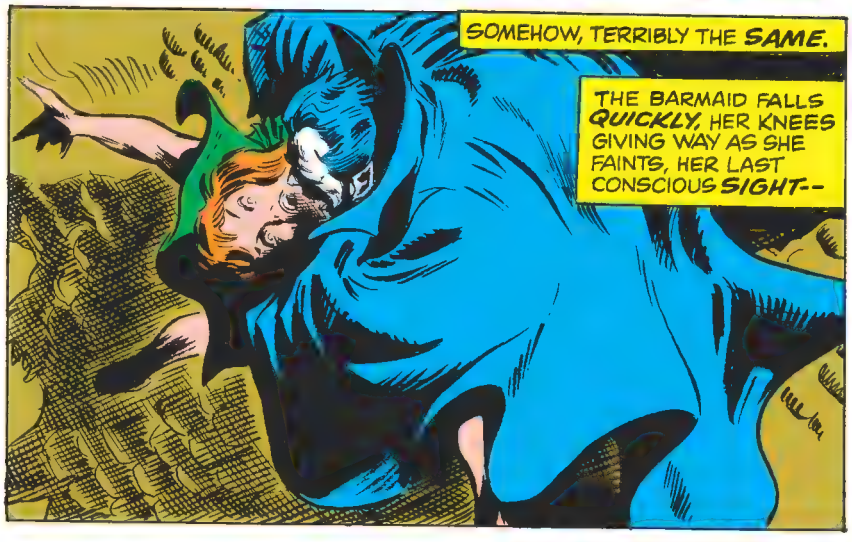
GONE. THE SILVER IN THE COMPACT MUST HAVE--
NO, THERE'S NO TIME TO THINK ABOUT THAT. CLIFTON MUST BE DEAD...

... AND JEANIE'S CLOSE... TO DYING!

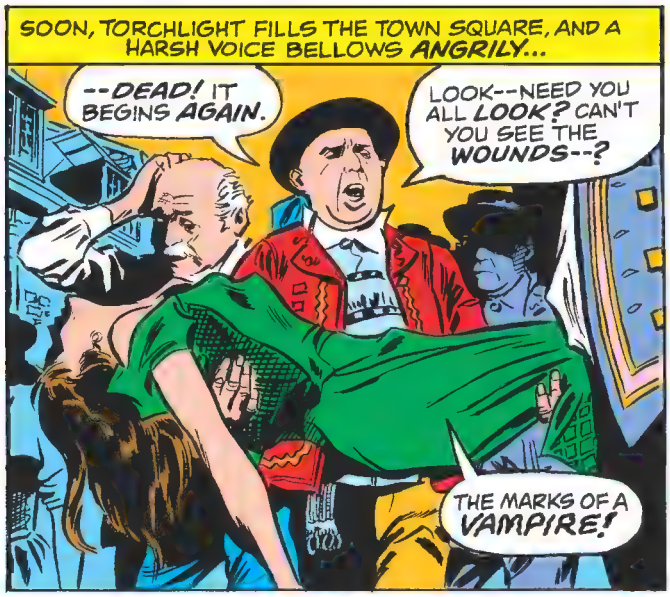

EVEN AS DRAKE CARRIES HIS FIANCEE'S LIMP FORM UP ILL-LIT STAIRS, HIS THOUGHTS GO OUTWARD--
--TO A DARK FLUTTERING FIGURE THAT EVEN NOW MUST SEARCH FOR SUSTENANCE--


--AND SEARCHING, FINDS THE VILLAGE!
THINGS HAVE CHANGED IN THE HUNDRED YEARS HE'S SLEPT--

THERE ARE NEW TOWNSFOLK, NEW WOMEN... AND YET, ALL IS SOMEHOW THE SAME...
--WHO?
EEEEEE

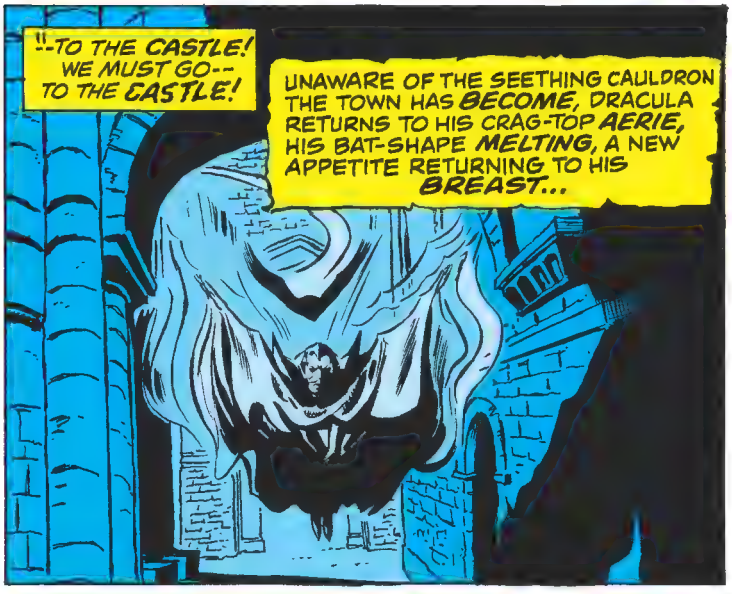

SOMEHOW, TERRIBLY THE SAME.
THE BARMAID FALLS QUICKLY, HER KNEES GIVING WAY AS SHE FAINTS, HER LAST CONSCIOUS SIGHT--

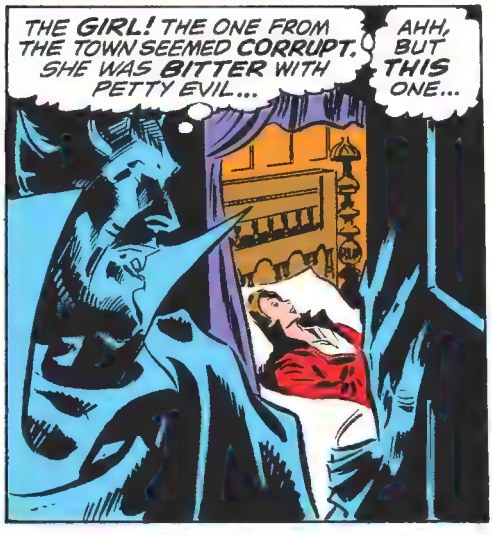
--THE FORM OF A CREATURE CALLED DRACULA!

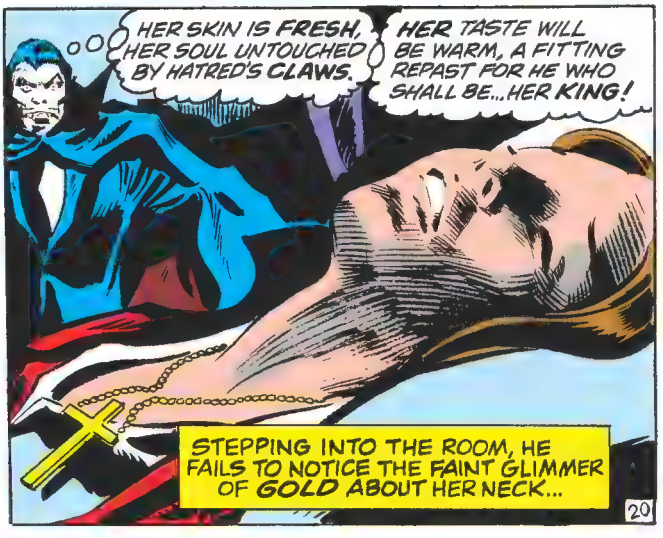

SOON, TORCHLIGHT FILLS THE TOWN SQUARE, AND A HARSH VOICE BELLOWS ANGRILY...
--DEAD! IT BEGINS AGAIN.
LOOK--NEED YOU ALL LOOK? CAN'T YOU SEE THE WOUNDS--?
THE MARKS OF A VAMPIRE!

THEM...IT MUST'VE BEEN THE THREE, I THINK.
THEY WENT TO THE CASTLE, AND NOW THE GIRL IS DEAD.
YOU MEAN HERR DRAKE?
OF COURSE. HE MUST HAVE WOKEN-- DRACULA!

QUICKLY THE PEOPLE GATHER, PRIMAL FEARS DRIVING THEM TO CLOT TOGETHER, DIM HATREDS GIVING RISE TO THEIR CRY--


--TO THE CASTLE! WE MUST GO-- TO THE CASTLE!
UNAWARE OF THE SEETHING CAULDRON THE TOWN HAS BECOME, DRACULA RETURNS TO HIS CRAG-TOP AERIE, HIS BAT-SHAPE MELTING, A NEW APPETITE RETURNING TO HIS BREAST...


THE GIRL! THE ONE FROM THE TOWN SEEMED CORRUPT. SHE WAS BITTER WITH PETTY EVIL...
AHH, BUT THIS ONE...


HER SKIN IS FRESH, HER SOUL UNTOUCHED BY HATRED'S CLAWS.
HER TASTE WILL BE WARM, A FITTING REPAST FOR HE WHO SHALL BE...HER KING!
STEPPING INTO THE ROOM, HE FAILS TO NOTICE THE FAINT GLIMMER OF GOLD ABOUT HER NECK...

NOW, A TINGLING GROWS WITHIN HIS VEINS, AND HIS EYES, LIKE TWIN SORES, BEGIN TO BURN. FINGERS TWITCHING, HE MOVES FORWARD--
--AND STOPS, HIS BODY WRENCHED BY THE SIGHT WHICH GREETS HIM--
NO!
A CRUCIFIX! HADES TAKE THEM-- WHO DARED--?
I DARED, COUNT...
YOU! WHO ARE YOU, MORTAL--THAT YOU THINK YOURSELF FIT TO FIGHT ME--HERE?
MY NAME'S FRANK DRAKE, COUNT...
IT USED TO BE DRACULA.
SO!
THAT'S RIGHT-- SO. I INHERITED THIS CASTLE FROM MY FATHER-- BUT I NEVER BEALLY BELIEVED THE LEGENDS OF MY FAMILY-- UNTIL NOW.
DON'T TRY TO TOUCH HER, DRACULA. I'D HAVE TO KILL YOU.
AHHH... AND HOW WOULD YOU PROPOSE TO DO THAT, MY FRIEND?
WITH A WOODEN STAKE?
NO, COUNT... WITH THIS! I KNOW ALL THE SUPERSTITIONS--
-- HOW SILVER SNAPS SOME HIDDEN WEAKNESS WITHIN YOU--
--AND MOST OF ALL--
--HOW YOU CAN'T STAND THE SIGHT-- OF A MIRROR!
LIPS PEAL BACK, BARING YELLOW-STAINED FANGS-- AND DRACULA SNARLS!

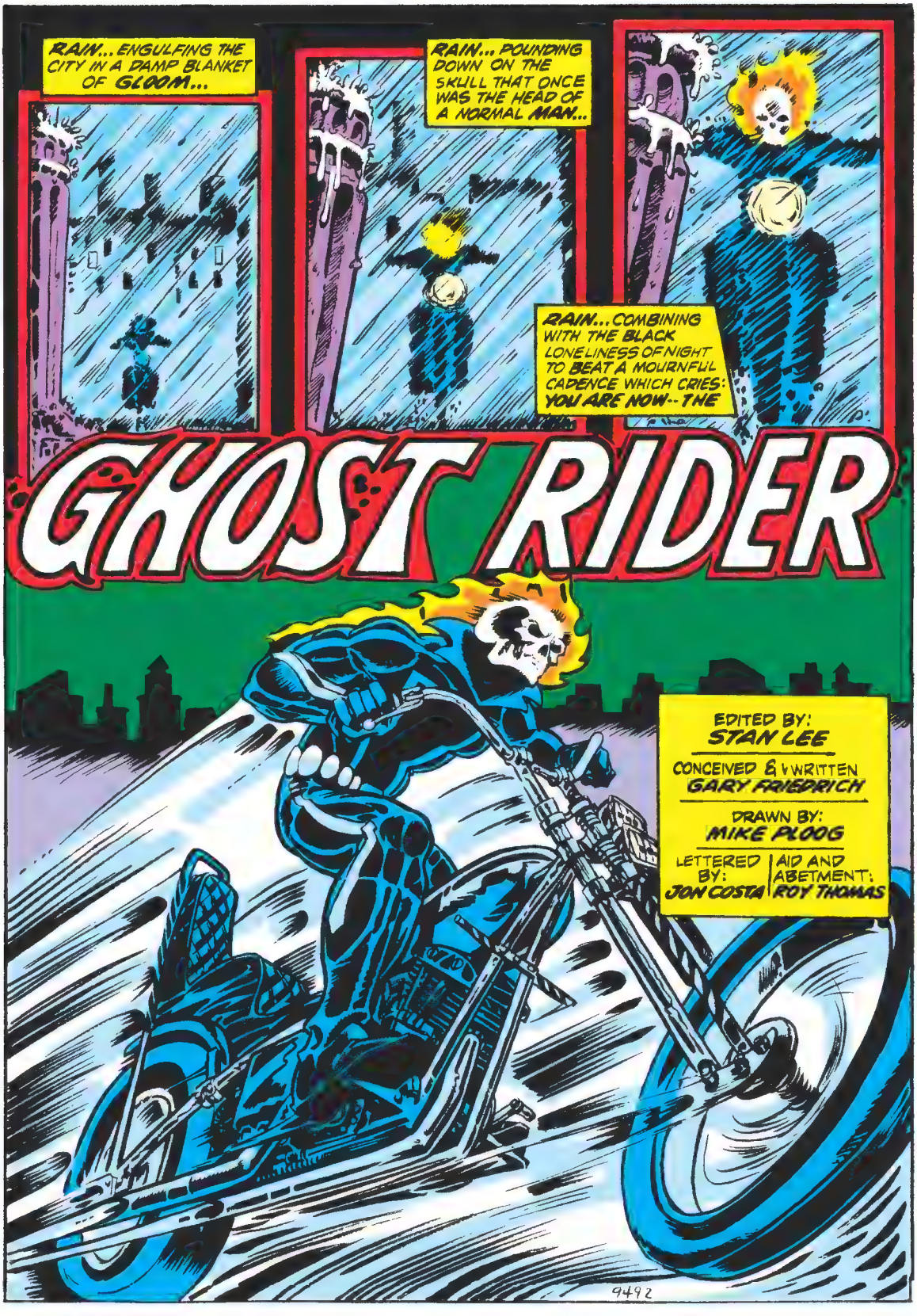
COUSIN, YOU ARE A FOOL. THE BLOOD OF DRACULAS RUNS IN YOUR VEINS--!
SOMEDAY THE CURSE WILL VISIT YOU AS WELL--
AND YOU, HERR DRAKE-- SHALL LIVE-- WITH DEATH!
THAT BURNS IT, BUDDY.
MAYBE I AM A DESCENDANT OF YOURS-- BUT YOU WERE BITTEN, COUNT--
--AND FRANKLY, THAT'S ONE THING I'M PLANNING TO AVOID!
WAK!
IDIOT! DID YOU REALLY THINK THAT COMPACT WOULD DESTROY ME?
YOU'VE SEALED YOUR END, MY FRIEND--
--FOR, WHOEVER STRIKES DRACULA--
--STRIKES DEATH!
22

HER EYES OPEN, BLINK AGAINST THE DARKNESS...SHE SHIFTS, AWARE OF SOUNDS FROM THE ROOM BEHIND HER...A SICKENING THUD...
...AND THEN...
AT LAST, MY DEAR... IT SEEMS WE ARE ALONE.
FRANNNK!
FAR BELOW, CAPPED HEADS LOOK SKYWARD, NECKS CRANE AND EYES NARROW--THE SCREAM FADES OFF, AND THE MEN HASTEN THEIR PACE--
--TO THE CASTLE, --TO THE CASTLE!
AND MIDST THE GRAY SHADOWS, A HAND FLICKS OUT, FINGERS DARTING. THE GIRL STARES, AND SLOWLY, HER EYES...GO BLANK.
THERE, MY DARLING... THERE.
REMOVE THAT HATED BAUBLE--
--REMOVE IT!
SHE HESITATES ONLY A MOMENT, HER ARM TREMBLING AS SHE WALKS TO THE WINDOW...
FOR AN INSTANT THE CROSS SPARKLES IN THE MOONLIGHT...
...THEN IT FALLS.

WHAT'S THIS?
A CRUCIFIX! IT FELL FROM THAT WINDOW...!
FRIENDS, PERHAPS WE ARE...TOO LATE!
BOOTED FEET POUND MOSS-SLICKENED STONE, SHOULDERS SLAM 'GAINST WOODEN DOORS...
VOICES RAISED IN FURY, TORCHES FLICKERING AND DIVING IN THE BLACKNESS, THE VILLAGERS ENTER THE NIGHTBLACK CASTLE--
--AND, WITH MADDENED FRENZY--
--PUT IT TO FLAME!
WHILE, IN THE DUSTY ATTIC ROOM ABOVE...
MY HEAD...SPINNING! DRACULA MUST HAVE THOUGHT ME DEAD.
WAIT-- WHAT'S HE--
JEANIE!
HIS BODY MOVES BLINDLY, ALMOST WITHOUT THOUGHT--
--AND INSTINCTIVELY MOVES WELL!
THAT BLASTED COMPACT! YOU CATCH ME UNAWARES, COUSIN!
VERY WELL, I'LL LEAVE--

--SINCE THIS PLACE--IS DOOMED TO BURN!
SMOKE WATERS HIS EYES, STINGS HIS NOSTRILS. LIKE A MAN IN A TRANCE, HE LIFTS JEANIE'S STILL BODY...
...AND STAGGERS, ALMOST FALLING OUTSIDE...!
IT'S... OVER NOW.
HE'S GONE. DRACULA'S GONE.
SILENTLY, THEY LEAVE. THEY'LL HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH A MAN WHO WAKES DEMONS...
A MAN SOON COME... TO GRIEF.
...JEANIE?
NO! I CAME TOO LATE.
SHE'S DEAD.
DEAD!
THEN, AT HIS FEET, SOMETHING RUSTLES, CLOTH AGAINST CLOTH... DRAKE LOOKS, AND A CHILL CUTS THROUGH TO HIS BONES...
FRANKIE, FRANKIE, DON'T CRY...
I'M NOT DEAD, YOU SEE. I'M NOT.
WHEN YOU'RE BITTEN BY A VAMPIRE, YOU DON'T DIE!
YOU NEVER DIE...NEVER!
LAUGHING, SHE MOVES TO HER FEET--AND FOR THE FIRST TIME, DRAKE SEES THE LOOMING BAT--
--AND KNOWS THAT HE'S LOST HER--
--AND PERHAPS FOREVER GAINED-- A DEMON'S CURSE!
FINIS

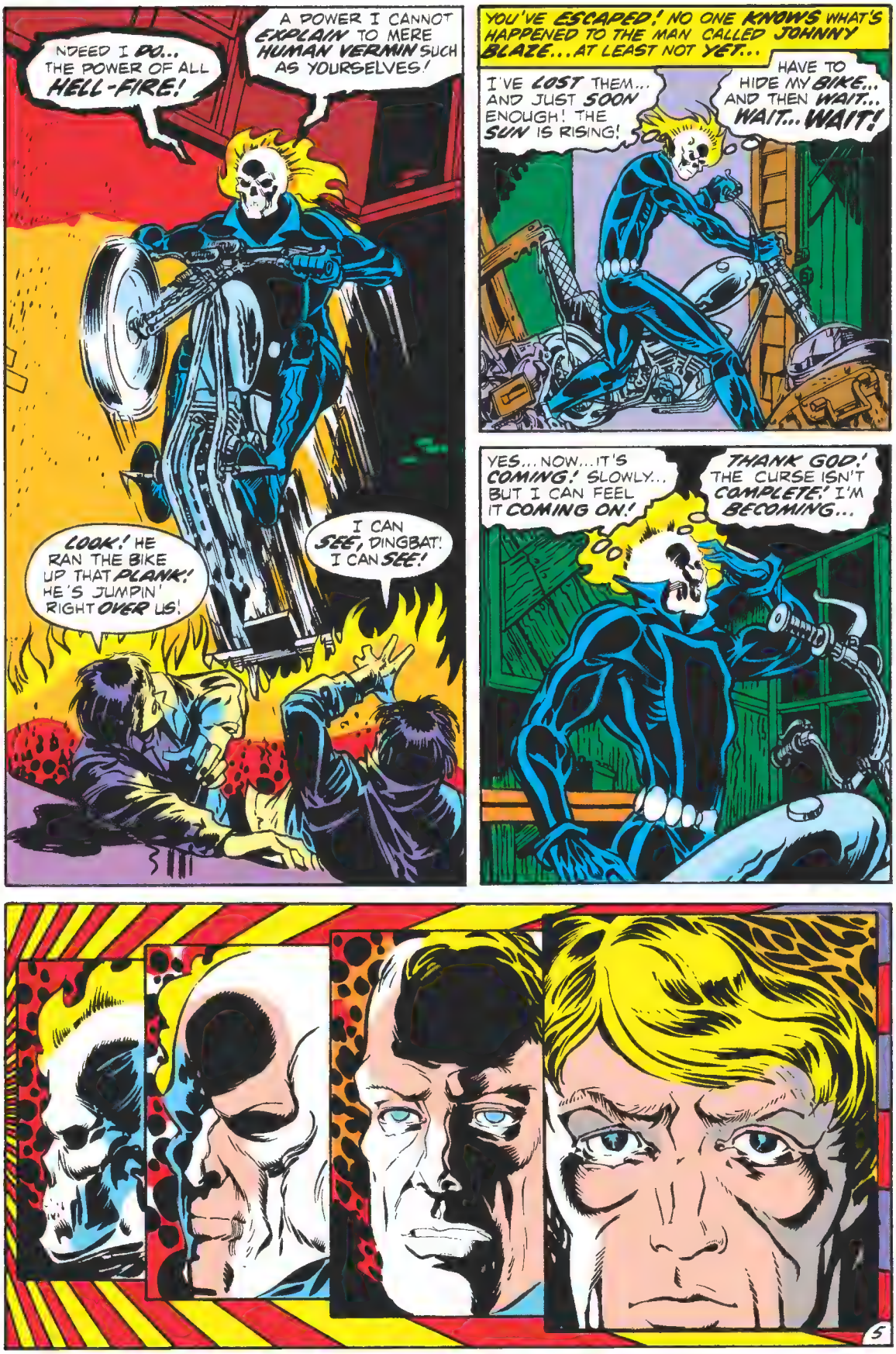
MARVEL SPOTLIGHT
MARVEL COMICS GROUP
20¢
5
AUG
02120
MARVEL SPOTLIGHT ON...
GHOST RIDER
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
IS HE ALIVE.. OR DEAD?
A LEGEND IS BORN!
PLOOG
THE MOST SUPERNATURAL SUPERHERO OF ALL!

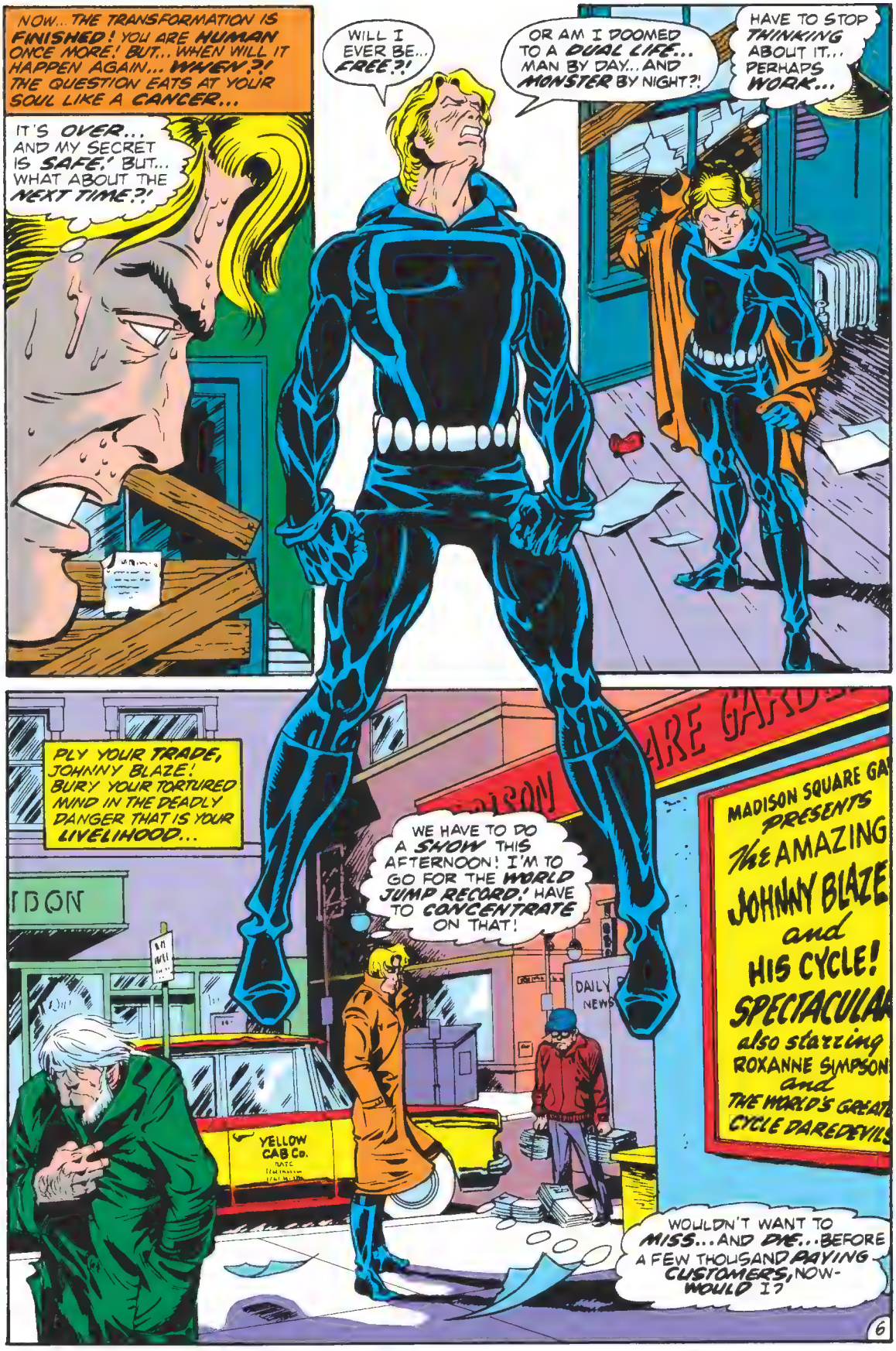

RAIN... ENGULFING THE CITY IN A DAMP BLANKET OF GLOOM...
RAIN... POUNDING DOWN ON THE SKULL THAT ONCE WAS THE HEAD OF A NORMAL MAN...
RAIN... COMBINING WITH THE BLACK LONELINESS OF NIGHT TO BEAT A MOURNFUL CADENCE WHICH CRIES: YOU ARE NOW--THE
GHOST RIDER
EDITED BY: STAN LEE
CONCEIVED & WRITTEN: GARY FRIEDRICH
DRAWN BY: MIKE PLOOG
LETTERED BY: JON COSTA
AID AND ABETMENT: ROY THOMAS
9492

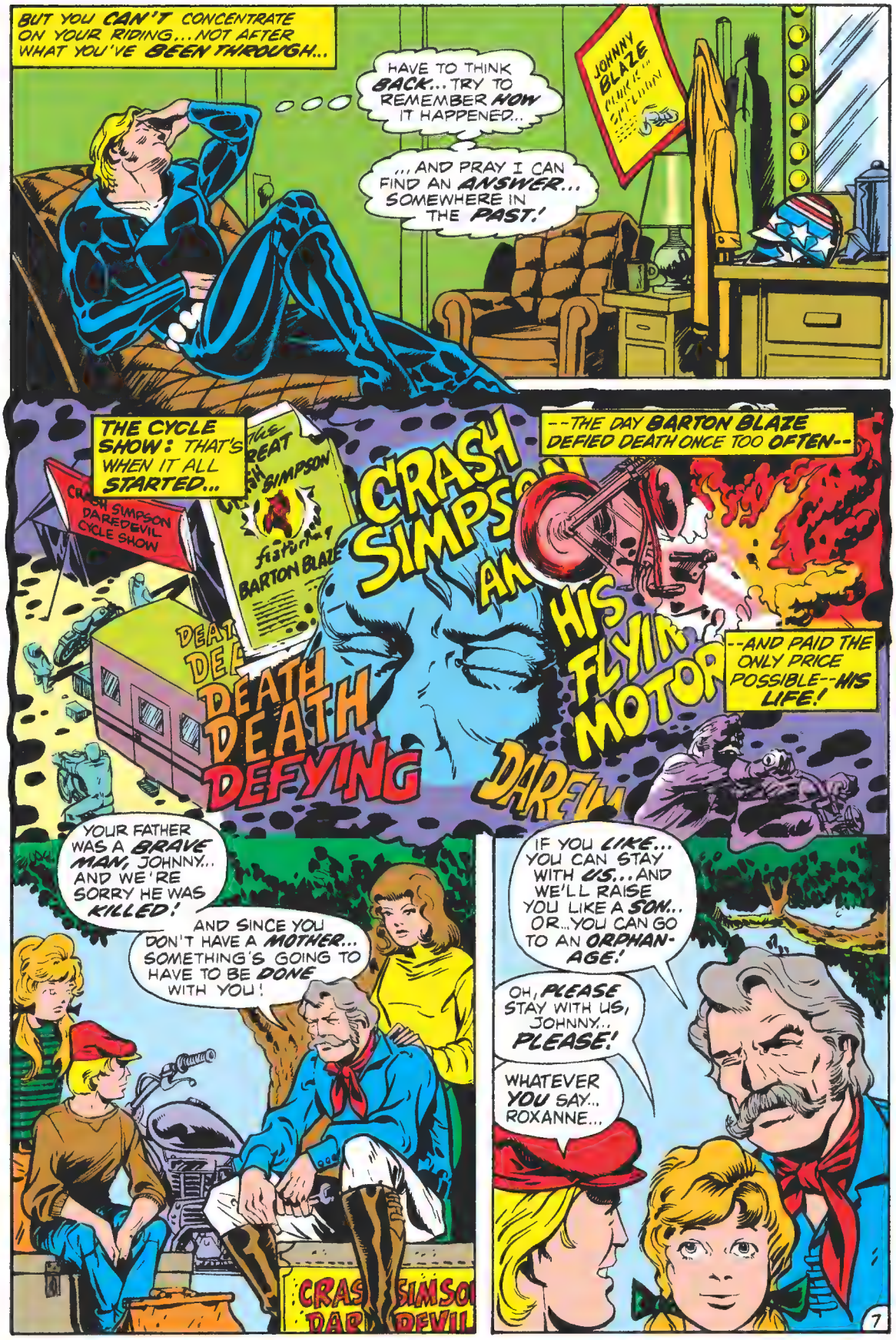
YOU SEE WHAT IS HAPPENING AS YOU SPEED DOWN A NEARLY DESERTED SIDE STREET...
KRAK
...AND YET YOUR TORMENTED BRAIN CHOOSES NOT TO SEE IT... SO YOU RIDE ON...
...NEVER CONSIDERING THE FACT THAT YOU ARE DOOMED TO COME INTO CONTACT WITH NORMAL MEN...
...AND THAT THEY ARE DOOMED TO HOUND YOU!... CHASE YOU... FOLLOW YOU INTO HELL IF NECESSARY...
...SIMPLY BECAUSE THEY CANNOT UNDERSTAND THE MONSTROSITY YOU HAVE BECOME...
THAT GUY SAW US... MIGHT BE ABLE TO IDENTIFY US IN COURT!
UGS
GET IN THE CAR, CLYDE! WE GOTTA GET HIM! HE'S THE ONLY WITNESS!
SUDDENLY, THEY'RE AFTER YOU... TRYING TO RUN YOU DOWN...
WHY... WHY NOW? I CAN'T LET ANYONE SEE ME... NOT LIKE THIS!
HAVE TO SHAKE THEM SOMEHOW... KEEP THEM FROM SEEING WHAT'S HAPPENED TO ME!
WE'RE CATCHING UP WITH 'IM! ANOTHER BLOCK OR SO... AND HE'LL BE DEAD MEAT!
I HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT... BUT THAT GLOW FROM HIS HEAD'S GIVIN' ME THE CREEPS!
PROBABLY JUST A LUMINOUS HELMET! NOTHING A BULLET WON'T STOP!
2

STREET'S TOO SLICK TO OUTRUN THEM! HAVE TO FIND ANOTHER WAY!
WE'RE CLOSIN' THE GAP! ANOTHER BLOCK OR SO AND.. WATCH IT!! HE'S CUTTIN' A CORNER--!
EEEEEEEE
NO DICE! THEY'RE STILL ON MY TAIL!
ONLY HOPE IS TO DUCK INTO AN ALLEY...
...LIKE THAT ONE COMING UP AHEAD!
HE'S TRYIN' TO SNEAK INTO THAT ALLEY! CUT 'IM OFF!
DEAD END BEWARE
THEY'RE TOO CLOSE... SAW ME! THERE'D BETTER BE A WAY OUT OF HERE... OR IT'S ALL OVER!
A DEAD END! NOW THERE'S ONLY ONE LAST CHANCE... THAT I CAN BLUFF THAT TRIGGER-HAPPY PAIR--
--SCARE THEM INTO LETTING ME PASS!
3

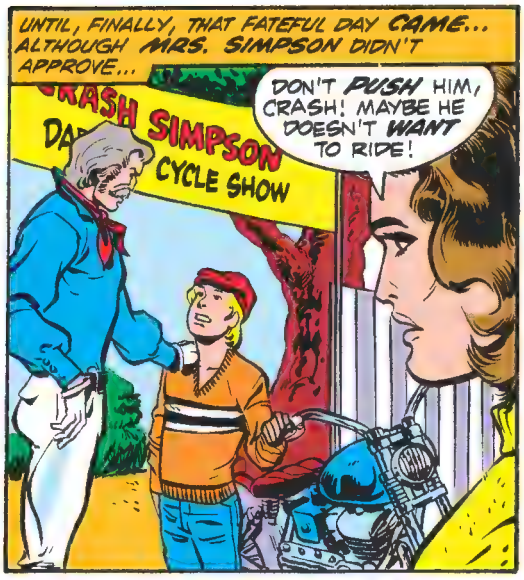
HE'S IN THERE, ALRIGHT! WE GOT 'IM CORNERED! AND SINCE DEAD MEN TELL NO TALES...
KNOCK IT OFF! LET'S JUST GET IN THERE AND FINISH 'IM!
HOW MUCH TROUBLE CAN ONE CYCLE JOCK BE?!
KEEP O
MORE TROUBLE THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE... ESPECIALLY WHEN HE IS...
...THE SERVANT OF SATAN!
WHAT IS THIS?! IT AIN'T ANYWHERE CLOSE TO HALLOWEEN!
LOOKIT 'IM! HE AIN'T GOT NO FACE-- JUST A BLAZIN' SKULL!
IT'S GOTTA BE SOME KIND OF TRICK... AND ANY TRICK CAN BE STOPPED BY BULLETS!
A TRICK MAY-- BUT THIS IS NO TRICK... RATHER THE WORK OF THE MASTER OF DARKNESS! OBSERVE!
FIRST... A BARRIER OF FIRE... AND THEN...
HE'S PLAYIN' GAMES WITH US! DRILL 'IM!
I'LL TRY... BUT ANY DUDE WHO CAN SET THE GROUND ON FIRE JUST BY POINTIN' AT IT MUST HAVE SOMETHIN' GOING FOR 'IM!
4

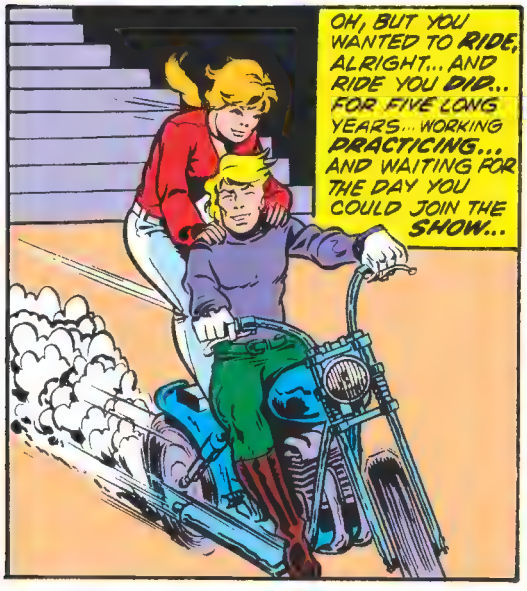

A POWER I CANNOT EXPLAIN TO MERE HUMAN VERMIN SUCH AS YOURSELVES!
INDEED I DO... THE POWER OF ALL HELL-FIRE!
I CAN SEE, DINGBAT! I CAN SEE!
LOOK! HE RAN THE BIKE UP THAT PLANK! HE'S JUMPIN' RIGHT OVER US!
YOU'VE ESCAPED! NO ONE KNOWS WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THE MAN CALLED JOHNNY BLAZE... AT LEAST NOT YET...
I'VE LOST THEM... AND JUST SOON ENOUGH! THE SUN IS RISING!
HAVE TO HIDE MY BIKE... AND THEN WAIT... WAIT... WAIT!
YES... NOW... IT'S COMING! SLOWLY... BUT I CAN FEEL IT COMING ON!
THANK GOD! THE CURSE ISN'T COMPLETE! I'M BECOMING...
5

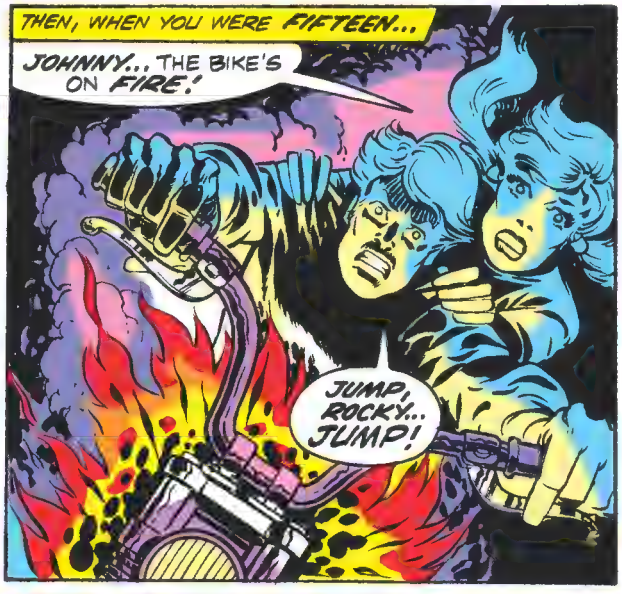

NOW... THE TRANSFORMATION IS FINISHED! YOU ARE HUMAN ONCE MORE! BUT... WHEN WILL IT HAPPEN AGAIN... WHEN?! THE QUESTION EATS AT YOUR SOUL LIKE A CANCER...
IT'S OVER... AND MY SECRET IS SAFE.' BUT... WHAT ABOUT THE NEXT TIME?!
WILL I EVER BE... FREE?!
OR AM I DOOMED TO A DUAL LIFE... MAN BY DAY... AND MONSTER BY NIGHT?!
HAVE TO STOP THINKING ABOUT IT... PERHAPS WORK...
PLY YOUR TRADE, JOHNNY BLAZE! BURY YOUR TORTURED MIND IN THE DEADLY DANGER THAT IS YOUR LIVELIHOOD...
WE HAVE TO DO A SHOW THIS AFTERNOON! I'M TO GO FOR THE WORLD JUMP RECORD.' HAVE TO CONCENTRATE ON THAT!
MADISON SQUARE GA PRESENTS THE AMAZING JOHNNY BLAZE and HIS CYCLE! SPECTACULA also starring ROXANNE SIMPSON and THE WORLD'S GREAT CYCLE DAREDEVIL
YELLOW CAB Co.
DAILY NEWS
WOULDN'T WANT TO MISS... AND DIE... BEFORE A FEW THOUSAND PAYING CUSTOMERS, NOW- WOULD I?

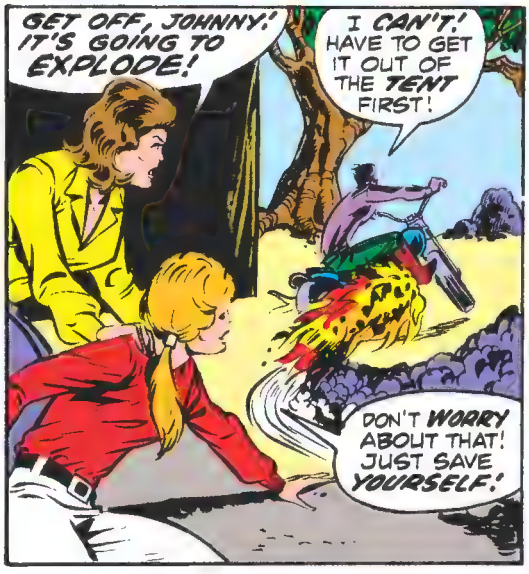

BUT YOU CAN'T CONCENTRATE ON YOUR RIDING... NOT AFTER WHAT YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH...
HAVE TO THINK BACK... TRY TO REMEMBER HOW IT HAPPENED...
... AND PRAY I CAN FIND AN ANSWER... SOMEWHERE IN THE PAST!
JOHNNY BLAZE
THE CYCLE SHOW: THAT'S WHEN IT ALL STARTED...
CRASH SIMPSON DAREDEVIL CYCLE SHOW
BARTON BLAZE
CRASH SIMPSON AND HIS FLYIN' MOTOR
--THE DAY BARTON BLAZE DEFIED DEATH ONCE TOO OFTEN--
--AND PAID THE ONLY PRICE POSSIBLE--HIS LIFE!
DEATH DEFYING
DAREDEVIL
YOUR FATHER WAS A BRAVE MAN, JOHNNY... AND WE'RE SORRY HE WAS KILLED!
AND SINCE YOU DON'T HAVE A MOTHER... SOMETHING'S GOING TO HAVE TO BE DONE WITH YOU!
IF YOU LIKE... YOU CAN STAY WITH US... AND WE'LL RAISE YOU LIKE A SON... OR... YOU CAN GO TO AN ORPHANAGE!
OH, PLEASE STAY WITH US, JOHNNY... PLEASE!
WHATEVER YOU SAY... ROXANNE...
7

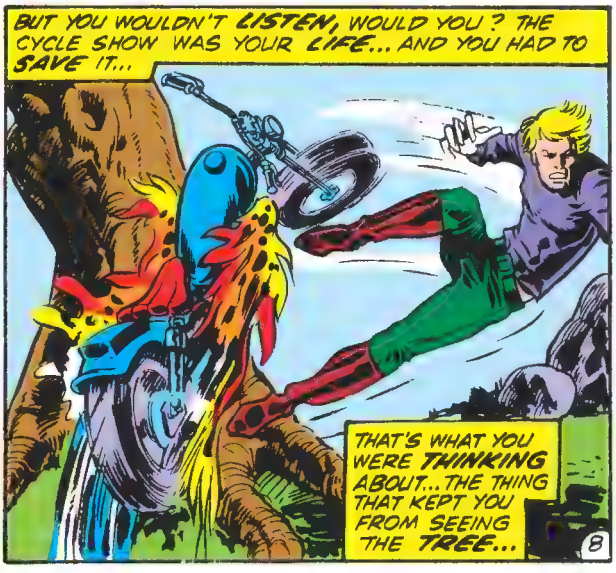
AND SO YOU STAYED... OVERCAME YOUR FEAR OF MOTORCYCLES... AND LONGED FOR THE DAY WHEN YOU COULD RIDE AND LOOK DEATH STRAIGHT IN THE EYE...


UNTIL, FINALLY, THAT FATEFUL DAY CAME... ALTHOUGH MRS. SIMPSON DIDN'T APPROVE...
DON'T PUSH HIM, CRASH! MAYBE HE DOESN'T WANT TO RIDE!
CRASH SIMPSON
CYCLE SHOW

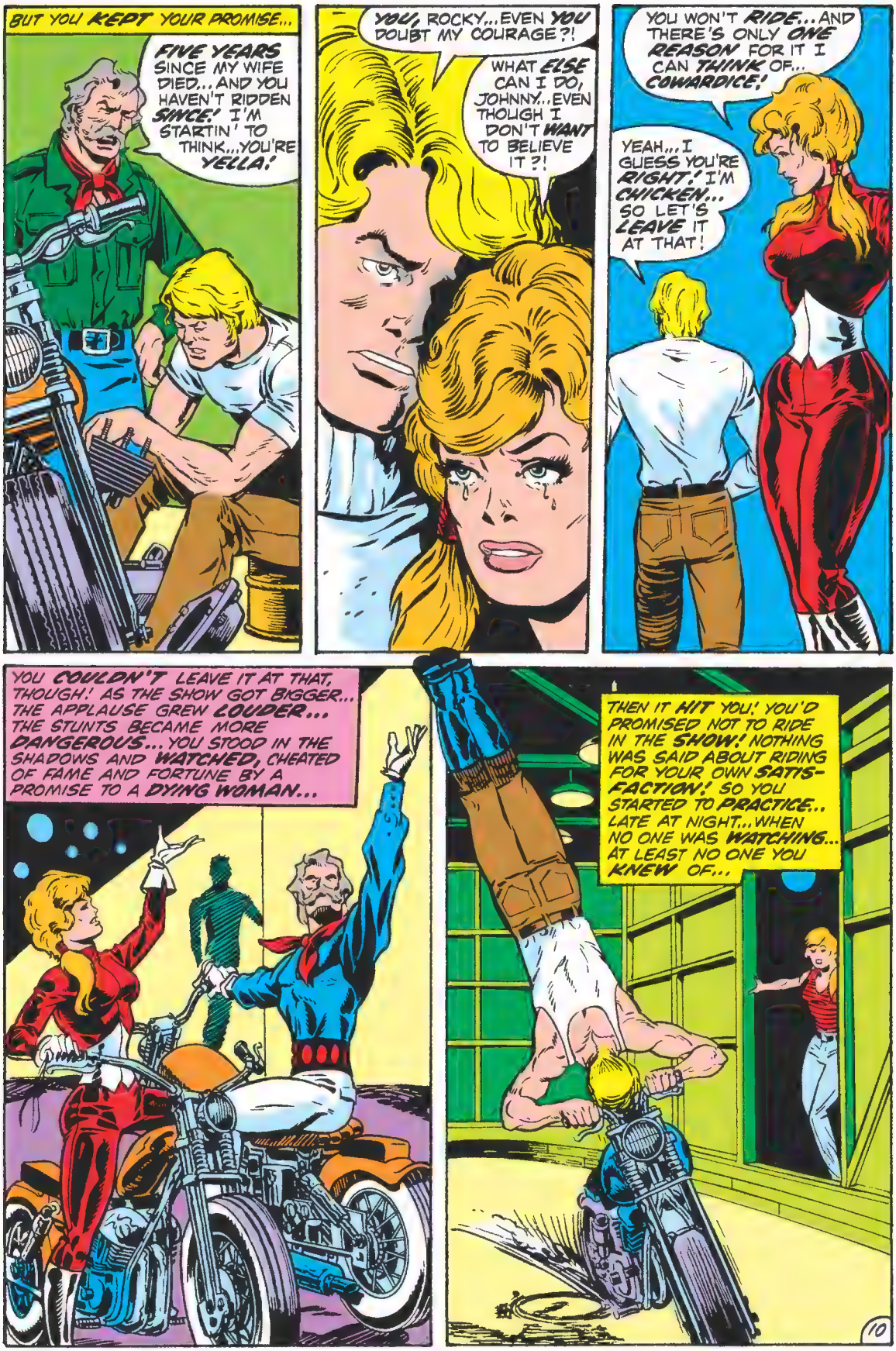

OH, BUT YOU WANTED TO RIDE, ALRIGHT... AND RIDE YOU DID.. FOR FIVE LONG YEARS... WORKING PRACTICING... AND WAITING FOR THE DAY YOU COULD JOIN THE SHOW...

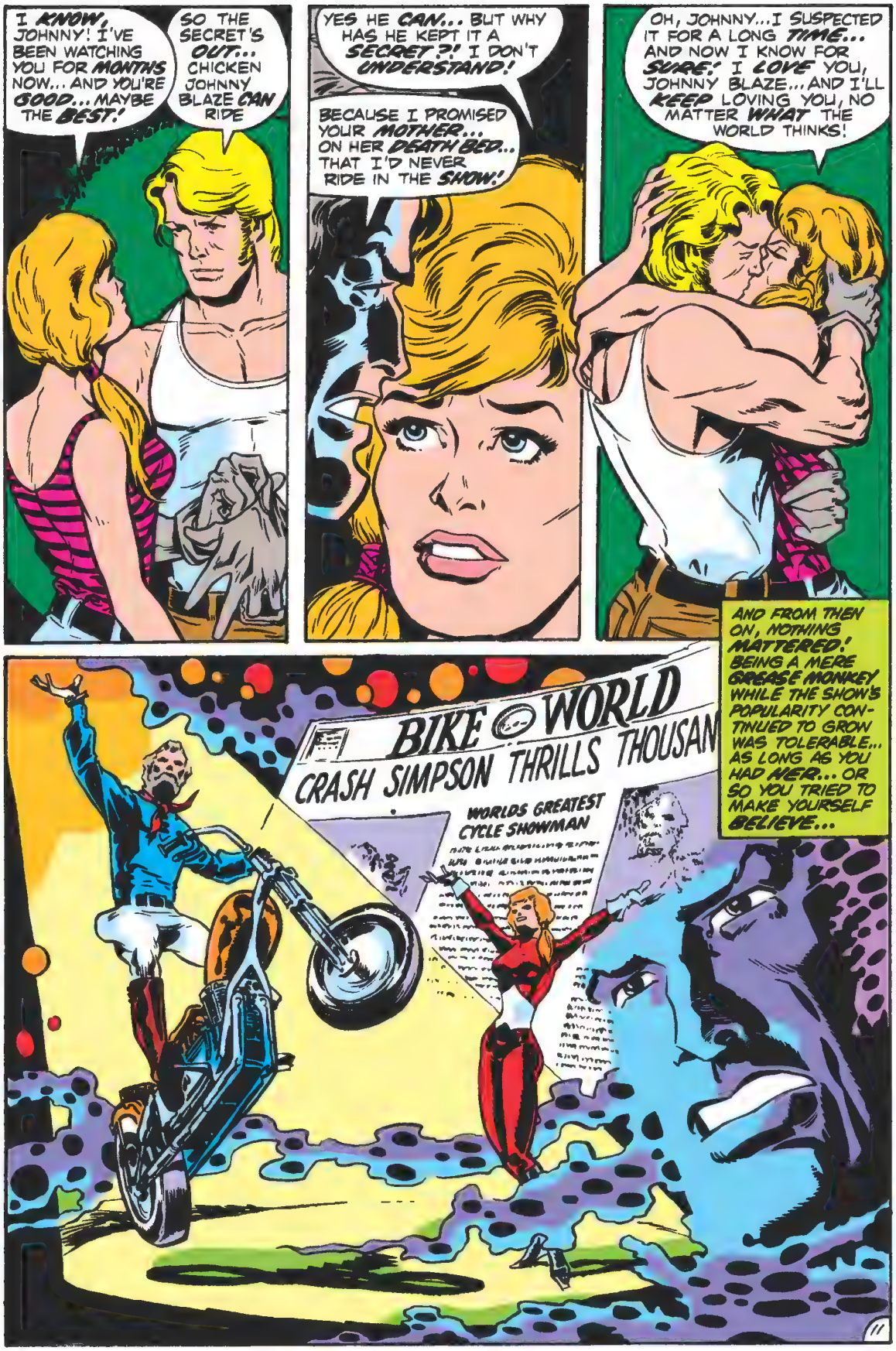

THEN, WHEN YOU WERE FIFTEEN...
JOHNNY... THE BIKE'S ON FIRE!
JUMP, ROCKY... JUMP!


GET OFF, JOHNNY! IT'S GOING TO EXPLODE!
I CAN'T! HAVE TO GET IT OUT OF THE TENT FIRST!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT! JUST SAVE YOURSELF!

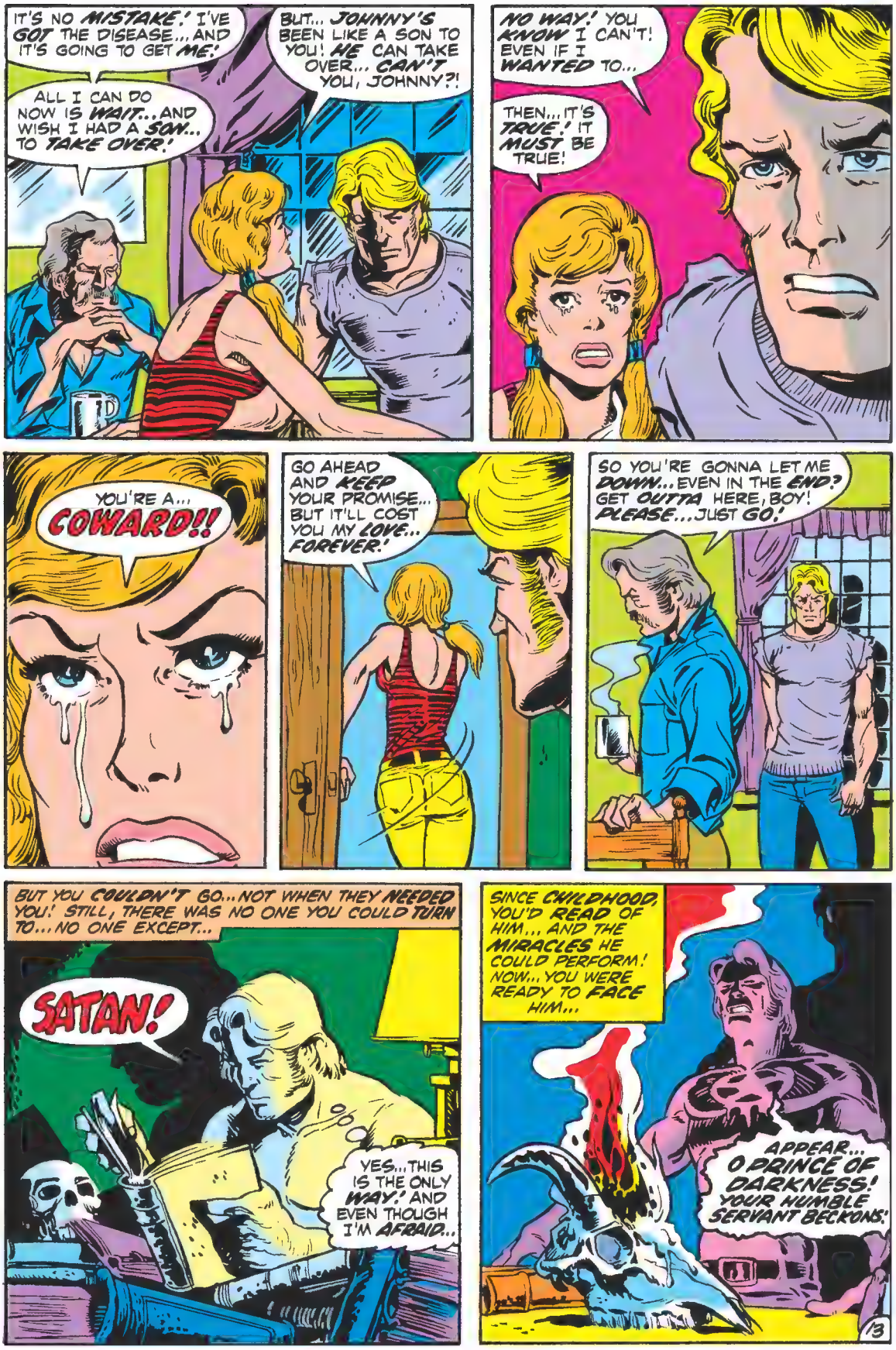

BUT YOU WOULDN'T LISTEN, WOULD YOU? THE CYCLE SHOW WAS YOUR LIFE... AND YOU HAD TO SAVE IT...
THAT'S WHAT YOU WERE THINKING ABOUT... THE THING THAT KEPT YOU FROM SEEING THE TREE...
8

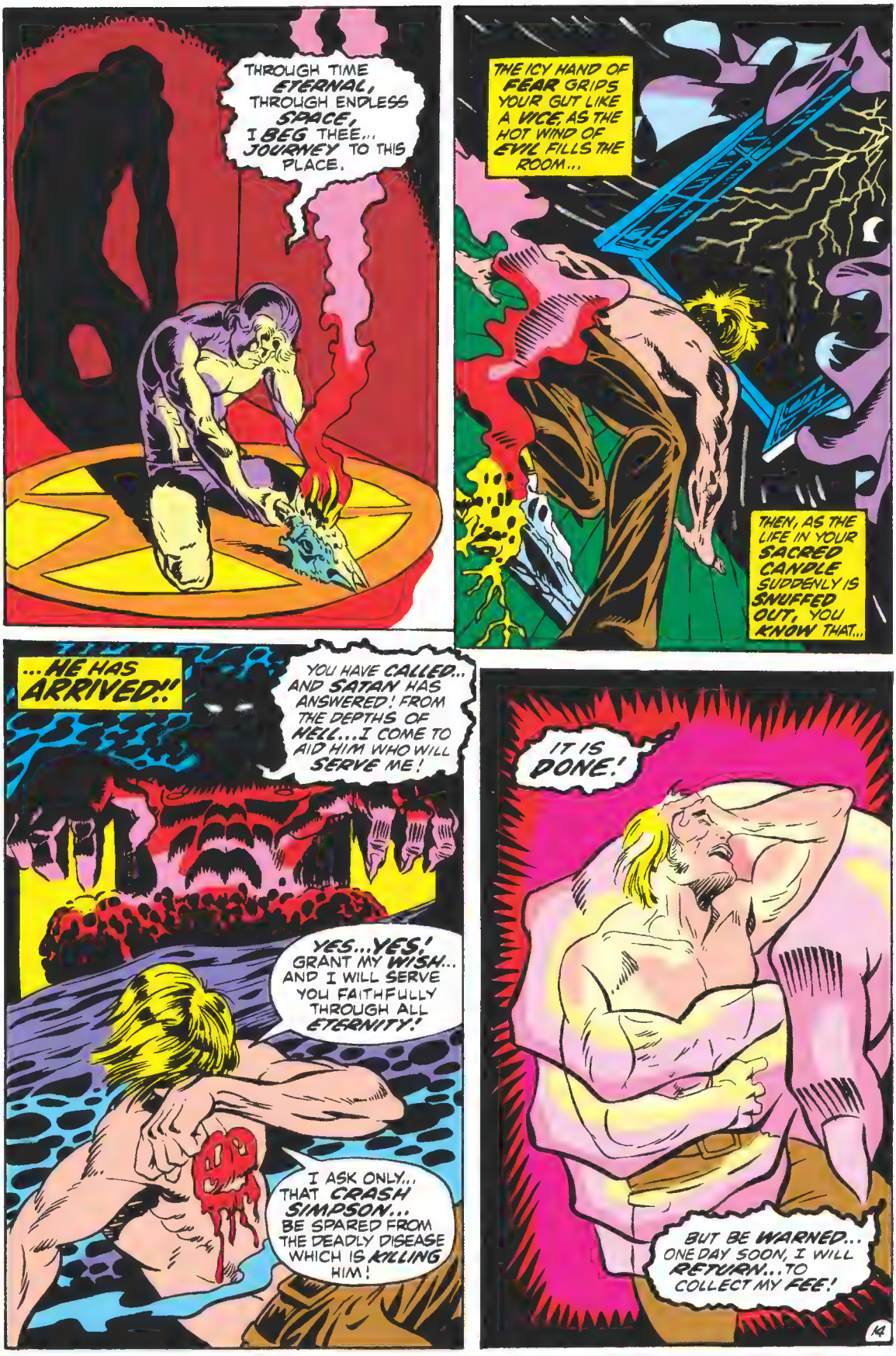
JOHNNY... JOHNNY! ARE YOU HURT?!
GET BACK! THIS THING'S GOING TO EXPLODE ANY SEC--
WHOOM!
MOTHER... MOTHER!
SHE WASN'T EVEN RELATED TO YOU... STILL, SHE'D RAISED YOU... AND GIVEN HER LIFE FOR YOU...
JOHNNY... I MUST SPEAK TO... JOHNNY! COME CLOSER PLEASE
SO THERE WAS NO WAY YOU COULD DENY HER LAST REQUEST...
JOHNNY... PROMISE ME... YOU'LL NEVER RIDE IN THE SHOW... PROMISE ME... PLEASE!
I PROMISE YOU, MOTHER! I ALWAYS WANTED TO CALL YOU THAT... AND NOW... IT'S TOO LATE!
BUT SHE NEVER HEARD YOU SPEAK THAT CHERISHED NAME! DEATH CAME QUICKLY... ONCE YOU HAD MADE THAT FINAL VOW... THE VOW YOU COULDN'T GET OUT OF YOUR MIND... EVEN AS YOU KNELT BESIDE THE FRESH BLANKET OF EARTH WHICH COVERED HER...
R.I.P.
EVEN AS YOU TRIED TO COMFORT POOR ROXANNE, YOU COULDN'T DRIVE AWAY THE BURNING THOUGHT THAT YOU COULD NEVER RIDE AGAIN... NEVER KNOW THE THRILL OF DEATH HURTLING TOWARD YOU AT A HUNDRED MILES AN HOUR! NO... NOT EVEN GRIEF AND THE COLD, DRIVING RAIN COULD MAKE YOU FORGET...
9


BUT YOU KEPT YOUR PROMISE...
FIVE YEARS SINCE MY WIFE DIED... AND YOU HAVEN'T RIDDEN SINCE! I'M STARTIN' TO THINK...YOU'RE YELLA!
YOU, ROCKY...EVEN YOU DOUBT MY COURAGE?!
WHAT ELSE CAN I DO, JOHNNY...EVEN THOUGH I DON'T WANT TO BELIEVE IT?!
YOU WON'T RIDE... AND THERE'S ONLY ONE REASON FOR IT I CAN THINK OF... COWARDICE!
YEAH... I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT! I'M CHICKEN... SO LET'S LEAVE IT AT THAT!
YOU COULDN'T LEAVE IT AT THAT, THOUGH! AS THE SHOW GOT BIGGER... THE APPLAUSE GREW LOUDER... THE STUNTS BECAME MORE DANGEROUS... YOU STOOD IN THE SHADOWS AND WATCHED, CHEATED OF FAME AND FORTUNE BY A PROMISE TO A DYING WOMAN...
THEN IT HIT YOU! YOU'D PROMISED NOT TO RIDE IN THE SHOW! NOTHING WAS SAID ABOUT RIDING FOR YOUR OWN SATISFACTION! SO YOU STARTED TO PRACTICE.. LATE AT NIGHT... WHEN NO ONE WAS WATCHING... AT LEAST NO ONE YOU KNEW OF...


I KNOW, JOHNNY! I'VE BEEN WATCHING YOU FOR MONTHS NOW... AND YOU'RE GOOD... MAYBE THE BEST!
SO THE SECRET'S OUT... CHICKEN JOHNNY BLAZE CAN RIDE
YES HE CAN... BUT WHY HAS HE KEPT IT A SECRET?! I DON'T UNDERSTAND!
BECAUSE I PROMISED YOUR MOTHER... ON HER DEATH BED... THAT I'D NEVER RIDE IN THE SHOW!
OH, JOHNNY... I SUSPECTED IT FOR A LONG TIME... AND NOW I KNOW FOR SURE! I LOVE YOU, JOHNNY BLAZE... AND I'LL KEEP LOVING YOU, NO MATTER WHAT THE WORLD THINKS!
AND FROM THEN ON, NOTHING MATTERED! BEING A MERE GREASE MONKEY WHILE THE SHOW'S POPULARITY CONTINUED TO GROW WAS TOLERABLE... AS LONG AS YOU HAD HER... OR SO YOU TRIED TO MAKE YOURSELF BELIEVE...
BIKE WORLD
CRASH SIMPSON THRILLS THOUSAN
WORLDS GREATEST CYCLE SHOWMAN

MORNING... ANOTHER CITY... ANOTHER HOTEL ROOM... AND A SIMPLE PHONE CALL... A CALL WHICH WILL CHANGE YOUR LIFE MORE DRASTICALLY THAN YOU CAN EVER KNOW...
DAILY
OH... HI, ALFIE! ANY NEWS ON THE BIG ONE... OR IS THIS ANOTHER SOCIAL CALL?!
WHAT... YOU REALLY GOT IT?! YOU WOULDN'T PUT US ON?! I... I'LL CALL YOU RIGHT BACK!
WE'VE DONE IT... MADISON SQUARE GARDEN!
THEN... THIS IS IT... THE BIGGEST SHOWCASE IN THE WORLD!
NO PRACTICE TODAY! TODAY WE CELEBRATE!
HOW ABOUT IT, CRASH? AFTER ALL THESE YEARS OF STRUGGLING...
...THE CRASH SIMPSON CYCLE SPECTACULAR HAS HIT THE TOP!
YEAH... YOU'RE RIGHT! BIG DEAL!
I RISK MY LIFE EVERY DAY FOR THIRTY YEARS... AND THEN WHEN I FINALLY REACH MY GOAL...
... THE DOC TELLS ME I MAY NOT LIVE TO SEE IT!
DADDY... WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?! DO YOU MEAN THAT...?!
THAT'S IT, BABY! DOC WARREN GIVES ME A MONTH... AT THE MOST!
GOOD LORD! THE SHOW... WITHOUT YOU?! IT CAN'T BE! THERE MUST BE SOME MISTAKE!

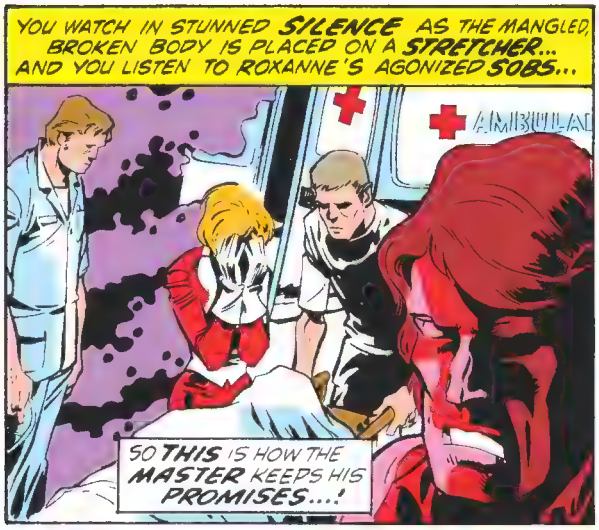

IT'S NO MISTAKE.' I'VE GOT THE DISEASE... AND IT'S GOING TO GET ME.'
ALL I CAN DO NOW IS WAIT... AND WISH I HAD A SON... TO TAKE OVER.'
BUT... JOHNNY'S BEEN LIKE A SON TO YOU! HE CAN TAKE OVER... CAN'T YOU, JOHNNY?!
NO WAY.' YOU KNOW I CAN'T! EVEN IF I WANTED TO...
THEN... IT'S TRUE.' IT MUST BE TRUE!
YOU'RE A... COWARD!!
GO AHEAD AND KEEP YOUR PROMISE... BUT IT'LL COST YOU MY LOVE... FOREVER.'
SO YOU'RE GONNA LET ME DOWN... EVEN IN THE END? GET OUTTA HERE, BOY! PLEASE... JUST GO.'
BUT YOU COULDN'T GO... NOT WHEN THEY NEEDED YOU.' STILL, THERE WAS NO ONE YOU COULD TURN TO... NO ONE EXCEPT...
SATAN!
YES... THIS IS THE ONLY WAY.' AND EVEN THOUGH I'M AFRAID...
SINCE CHILDHOOD, YOU'D READ OF HIM... AND THE MIRACLES HE COULD PERFORM! NOW... YOU WERE READY TO FACE HIM...
APPEAR... O PRINCE OF DARKNESS! YOUR HUMBLE SERVANT BECKONS!
13

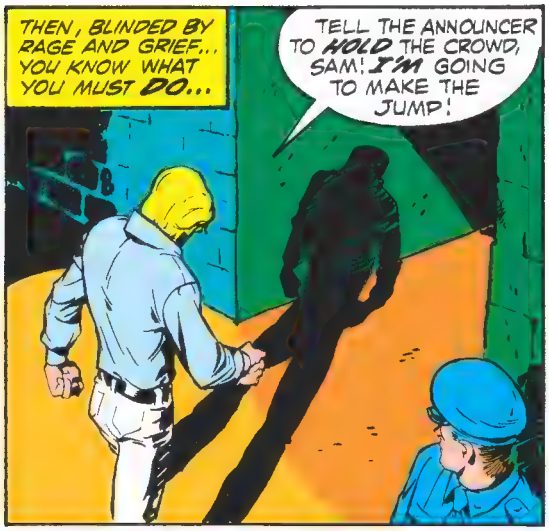

THROUGH TIME ETERNAL, THROUGH ENDLESS SPACE, I BEG THEE... JOURNEY TO THIS PLACE.
THE ICY HAND OF FEAR GRIPS YOUR GUT LIKE A VICE, AS THE HOT WIND OF EVIL FILLS THE ROOM...
THEN, AS THE LIFE IN YOUR SACRED CANDLE SUDDENLY IS SNUFFED OUT, YOU KNOW THAT...
...HE HAS ARRIVED!!
YOU HAVE CALLED... AND SATAN HAS ANSWERED! FROM THE DEPTHS OF HELL...I COME TO AID HIM WHO WILL SERVE ME!
YES...YES! GRANT MY WISH... AND I WILL SERVE YOU FAITHFULLY THROUGH ALL ETERNITY!
I ASK ONLY... THAT CRASH SIMPSON... BE SPARED FROM THE DEADLY DISEASE WHICH IS KILLING HIM!
IT IS DONE!
BUT BE WARNED... ONE DAY SOON, I WILL RETURN...TO COLLECT MY FEE!
14

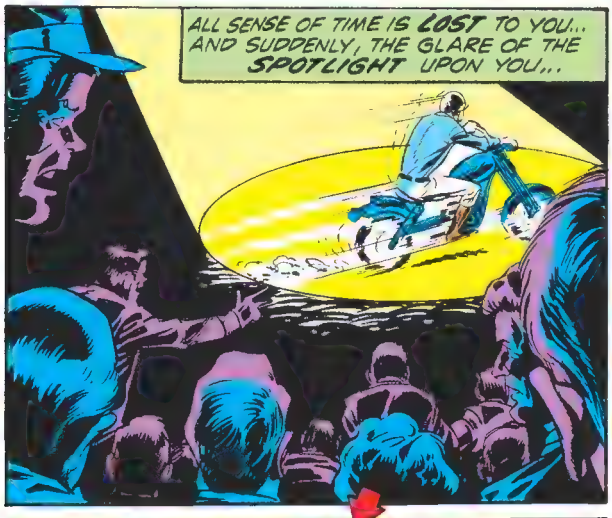
THEN, AS QUICKLY AS IT BEGAN... IT IS ENDED...
THE ROOM COOLS... AND THE SICKENING STENCH OF DEATH FADES FROM YOUR NOSTRILS! THE SACRED CANDLE BURNS ONCE MORE.. AND YOU KNOW THAT HE IS GONE! THE BARGAIN HAS BEEN SEALED...
YOU KNOW ONLY ONE END... AND YET, YOU FEEL STRANGELY RELIEVED... AS IF A GREAT WEIGHT HAS BEEN LIFTED FROM YOUR SHOULDERS! CRASH WILL LIVE.. AND PERHAPS ROXANNE WILL LOVE YOU AGAIN...
...IF THE MASTER GIVES YOU TIME... IF...
THREE WEEKS PASS.. AND YOU FIND YOURSELF IN NEW YORK... MADISON SQUARE GARDEN...
JOHNNY... IT'S DAD! COME QUICK! YOU HAVE TO STOP HIM!
MADISON SQUARE GARDEN
ME?! HOW COULD A COWARD LIKE ME KEEP HIM FROM DOING ANYTHING?!
PLEASE, JOHNNY! HE THINKS THIS MAY BE HIS LAST PERFORMANCE...
...AND HE'S ANNOUNCED THAT HE'LL TRY FOR THE WORLD'S CYCLE JUMP RECORD!
BUT--HE CAN'T! HE'S GOOD--BUT NOT GOOD ENOUGH! OKAY... LET'S FIND HIM!
ARE YOU OFF YOUR ROCKER, CRASH? YOU'RE GOING TO KILL YOURSELF!
SO WHAT?! IF I'M GONNA GO... IT'S GONNA BE HERE... ON MY BIKE! NOT IN SOME HOSPITAL BED!

THIS WAY... WHEN PEOPLE REMEMBER ME... THEY'LL REMEMBER I DIED WITH MY LEATHERS ON!
YOU'RE TALKING CRAZY, DAD! JOHNNY... DO SOMETHING!
SHE'S RIGHT, CRASH! YOU CAN'T GO THROUGH WITH IT!
AND WHO'S GONNA STOP ME...
...NOT A GUTLESS KID I RAISED LIKE A SON! THAT'S FOR SURE!
OKAY, HARDHEAD! YOU'VE CALLED ME NAMES FOR THE LAST TIME!
HAD TO PUT ON THAT SHOW... THOUGH I KNOW HE'S IN NO REAL DANGER!
I HAVE THE DEVIL'S WORD ON IT!
STILL, CAN EVEN HE GET A BIKE OVER 22 CARS?!
YOU HAVE FAITH... AND YET YOU DOUBT AS THE HOURS UNTIL SHOWTIME CRAWL BY! THEN, YOU STAND HELPLESS IN THE SHADOWS... AND THE MOMENT OF TRUTH IS UPON YOU...
A QUICK UPWARD FLICK OF THE THUMB... A SIGN THAT CRASH SIMPSON DOES CARE...
THEN, A DEAFENING ROAR... A CLOUD OF DUST... A CHEER FROM THE CROWD...
...AND SILENCE, SAVE FOR THE WHINE OF THE HARLEY'S ENGINE... AND THE POUNDING OF YOUR OWN HEART...
16

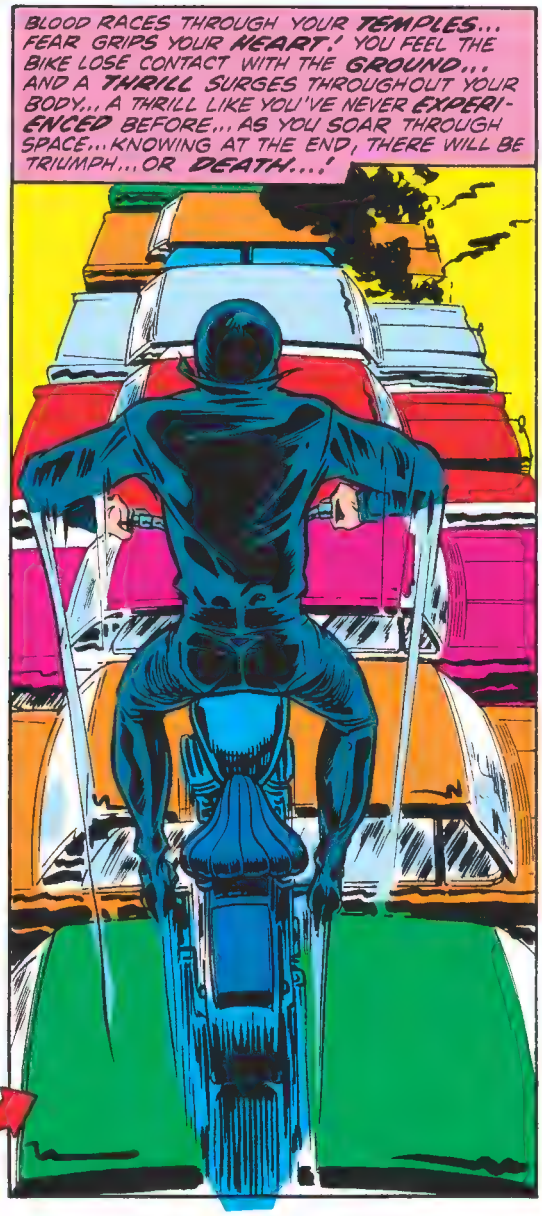
CRASH... OH, LORD...
CRRAAASHHH!


YOU WATCH IN STUNNED SILENCE AS THE MANGLED, BROKEN BODY IS PLACED ON A STRETCHER... AND YOU LISTEN TO ROXANNE'S AGONIZED SOBS...
AMBULANCE
SO THIS IS HOW THE MASTER KEEPS HIS PROMISES...!

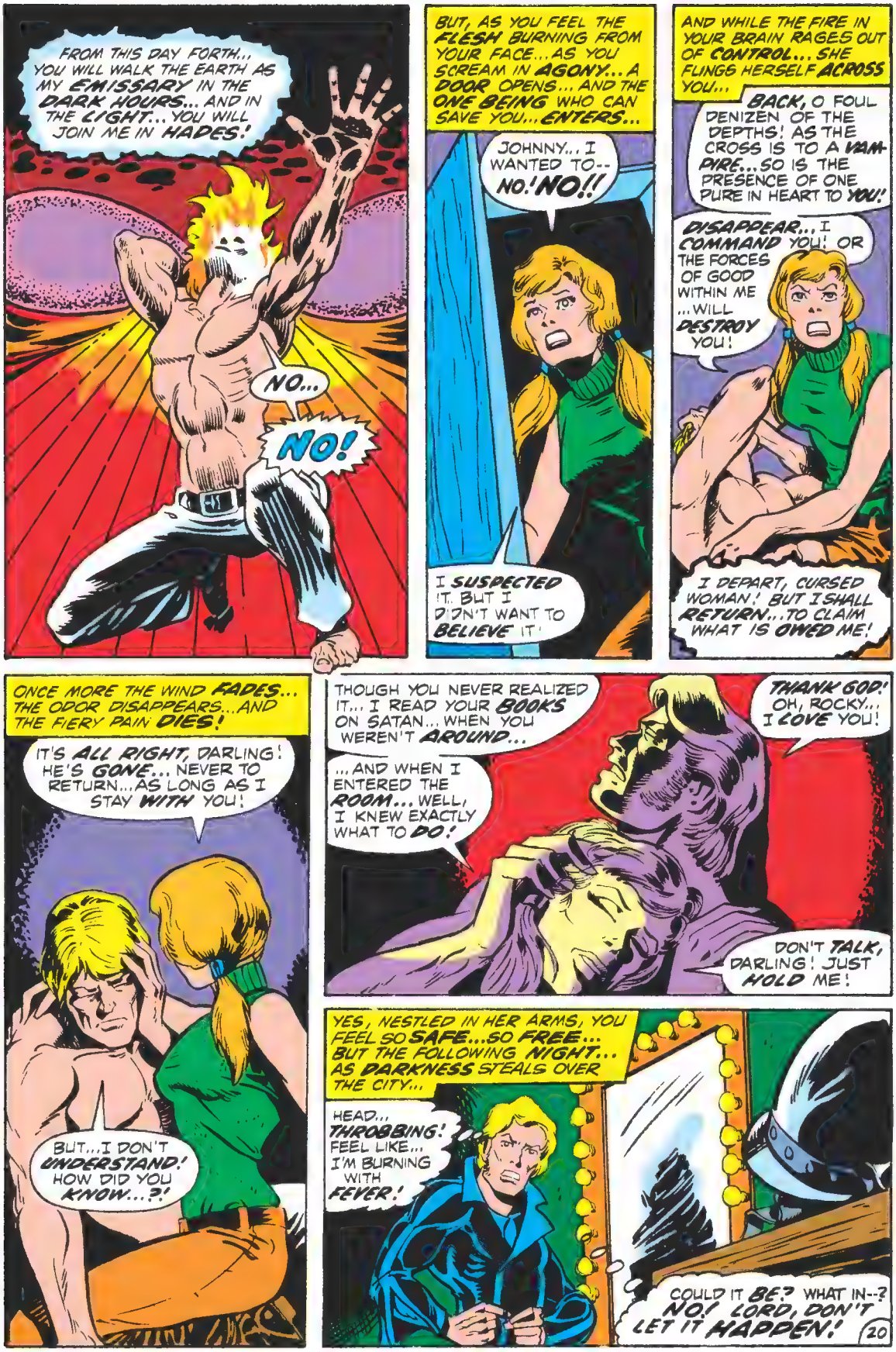

THEN, BLINDED BY RAGE AND GRIEF... YOU KNOW WHAT YOU MUST DO...
TELL THE ANNOUNCER TO HOLD THE CROWD, SAM! I'M GOING TO MAKE THE JUMP!


ALL SENSE OF TIME IS LOST TO YOU... AND SUDDENLY, THE GLARE OF THE SPOTLIGHT UPON YOU...

YOU'RE OBLIVIOUS TO THE GASPS OF THE CROWD... EVEN TO THE SCREAMS OF ROXANNE... AS ONE THOUGHT BURNS IN YOUR MIND... YOU MUST MAKE THE JUMP... FOR HIM!
JOHNNY... NOOOO! PLEASE... DON'T DO IT! DON'T!

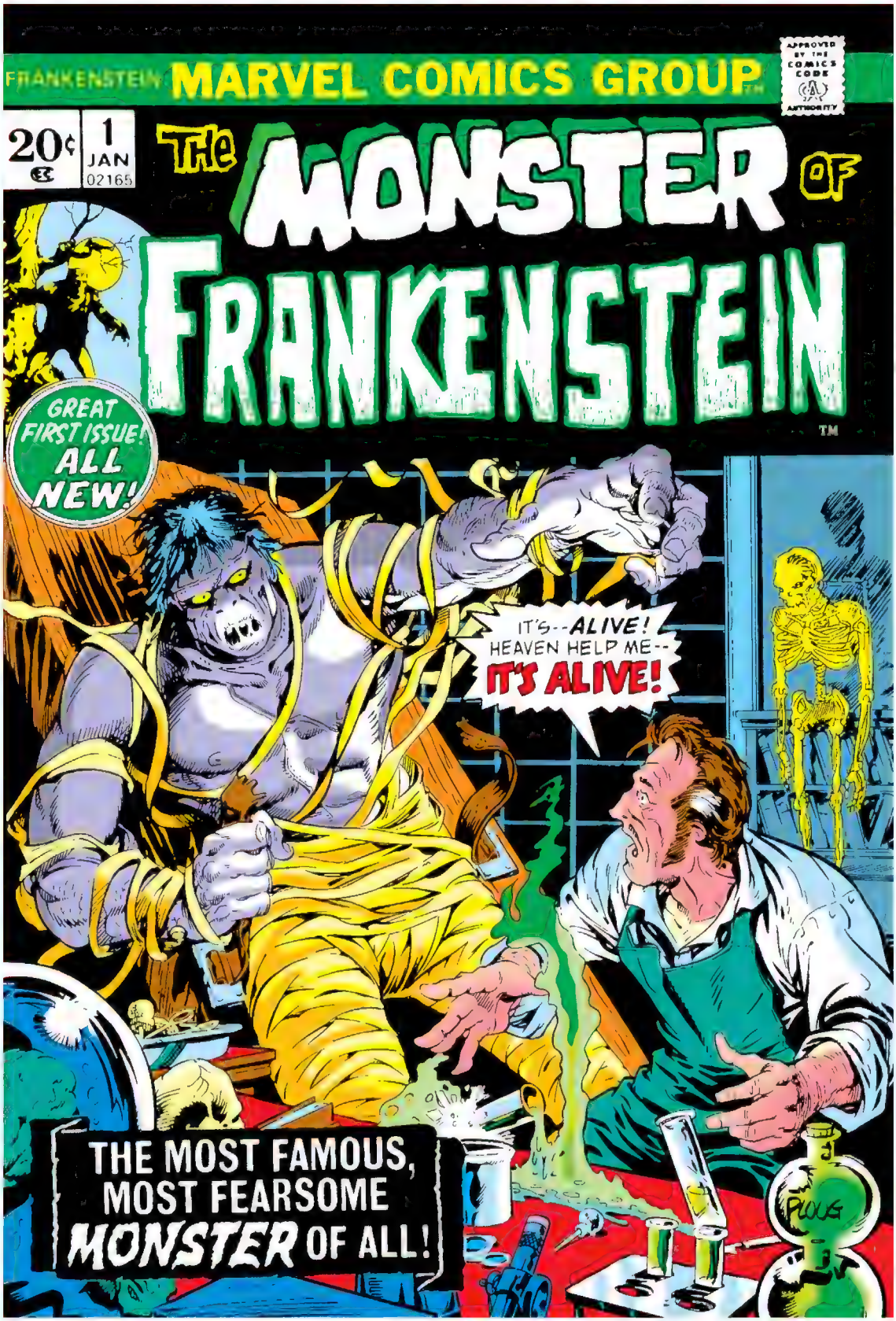

BLOOD RACES THROUGH YOUR TEMPLES... FEAR GRIPS YOUR HEART! YOU FEEL THE BIKE LOSE CONTACT WITH THE GROUND... AND A THRILL SURGES THROUGHOUT YOUR BODY... A THRILL LIKE YOU'VE NEVER EXPERIENCED BEFORE... AS YOU SOAR THROUGH SPACE... KNOWING AT THE END, THERE WILL BE TRIUMPH... OR DEATH...!

NOW, YOU BEGIN TO FALL... A RAPID DROP... PERHAPS TOO RAPID...
BUT... NO! YOU'VE DONE IT! YOU'RE THE CHAMPION... AND THE THICK NECTAR OF SUCCESS IS INTOXICATING BEYOND BELIEF...
THEN, AT YOUR HIGHEST EBB...
HOW WAS THAT... NOT BAD... FOR A COWARD, HUH?!
HOW COULD YOU... AFTER DAD...?!
I... I'M LEAVING! THE SHOW IS YOURS NOW... BUT I NEVER WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN!
ROCKY... WAIT! I ONLY DID IT... FOR YOU!
SUDDENLY, THE ROAR OF THE CROWD IS MEANING-LESS... AND YOU SEEK THE SOLACE OF YOUR DRESSING ROOM... AND THE ANSWERS YOU PRAY SILENCE CAN BRING YOU...
BUT THERE IS TO BE NO PEACE... NO SILENCE! FOR AS YOU CLOSE YOUR EYES... A HOT WIND ENGULFS YOU... A WIND YOU KNOW YOU HAVE FELT BEFORE...
YOU!
YOU DOUBLE-CROSS ME... THEN APPEAR AGAIN! YOU GOT A LOT OF GALL, DEVIL!
SILENCE, WEAKLING! I KEPT MY BARGAIN! THE MORTAL DID NOT DIE OF THE DISEASE! NOW I CLAIM MY REWARD... YOUR VERY SOUL!


FROM THIS DAY FORTH,, YOU WILL WALK THE EARTH AS MY EMISSARY IN THE DARK HOURS... AND IN THE LIGHT... YOU WILL JOIN ME IN HADES!
NO...
NO!
BUT, AS YOU FEEL THE FLESH BURNING FROM YOUR FACE... AS YOU SCREAM IN AGONY... A DOOR OPENS... AND THE ONE BEING WHO CAN SAVE YOU... ENTERS...
JOHNNY,, I WANTED TO-- NO! NO!!
I SUSPECTED IT. BUT I D'DN'T WANT TO BELIEVE IT'
AND WHILE THE FIRE IN YOUR BRAIN RAGES OUT OF CONTROL... SHE FLINGS HERSELF ACROSS YOU...
BACK, O FOUL DENIZEN OF THE DEPTHS! AS THE CROSS IS TO A VAMPIRE... SO IS THE PRESENCE OF ONE PURE IN HEART TO YOU!
DISAPPEAR... I COMMAND YOU! OR THE FORCES OF GOOD WITHIN ME ...WILL DESTROY YOU!
I DEPART, CURSED WOMAN! BUT I SHALL RETURN... TO CLAIM WHAT IS OWED ME!
ONCE MORE THE WIND FADES... THE ODOR DISAPPEARS... AND THE FIERY PAIN DIES!
IT'S ALL RIGHT, DARLING! HE'S GONE... NEVER TO RETURN... AS LONG AS I STAY WITH YOU!
BUT... I DON'T UNDERSTAND! HOW DID YOU KNOW...?!
THOUGH YOU NEVER REALIZED IT... I READ YOUR BOOKS ON SATAN... WHEN YOU WEREN'T AROUND...
... AND WHEN I ENTERED THE ROOM... WELL, I KNEW EXACTLY WHAT TO DO!
THANK GOD! OH, ROCKY... I LOVE YOU!
DON'T TALK, DARLING! JUST HOLD ME!
YES, NESTLED IN HER ARMS, YOU FEEL SO SAFE... SO FREE... BUT THE FOLLOWING NIGHT... AS DARKNESS STEALS OVER THE CITY...
HEAD... THROBBING! FEEL LIKE... I'M BURNING WITH FEVER!
COULD IT BE? WHAT IN--? NO! LORD, DON'T LET IT HAPPEN!
20

FOR WHAT SEEMS AN ETERNITY... THE SEARING PAIN BRINGS YOU TO THE BRINK OF INSANITY! THEN, SUDDENLY, IT SUBSIDED... BUT YOU KNOW SOMETHING HAS CHANGED...
AND YOU RUSHED TO A MIRROR... TO FIND...
NOOOOOOOO
WHEN THE SHOCK BEGINS TO EBB, YOU KNOW WHAT YOU MUST DO! YOU HAVE TO RUN... GET AWAY... NOT LET ANYONE SEE YOU... NOT LIKE THAT...
SO YOU FLEE... INTO THE NIGHT... NOT REALIZING YOU HAVE BEEN SEEN...
HEY... WHAT THE DEVIL'S THAT?!
I DUNNO ABOUT YOU... BUT I'M GONNA PRETEND I DIDN'T SEE A THING!
MADISON SQUARE GARDEN
THUS IT ENDS... THE DEADLY WAKING DREAM WHICH HAS SEEMED SO REAL... SO PALPABLE...
YES, ENDS... ONLY TO BECOME THE LIVING NIGHTMARE IT HAS BEEN FOR THREE WEEKS NOW... A NIGHTMARE WHICH SEEMINGLY NEVER WILL END... A CURSE FROM WHICH THERE IS NO ESCAPE... A HORRIFYING TRAP FROM WHICH DEATH WOULD SEEM A SWEET RESPITE...!
21

WHERE CAN I GO?! WHAT CAN I DO... WHEN I KNOW, THAT EACH NIGHT I'LL LOOK . FEEL... LIKE THAT!?
I'VE CHANGED ALL THE SHOWS TO MATINEES... AND TOLD ROCKY I'M PRACTICING AT NIGHT...
...BUT HOW MUCH LONGER CAN I GET AWAY WITH IT? HOW LONG BEFORE THE WORLD FINDS OUT?
THERE'S YOUR ANSWER! THOSE THUGS TOLD THE POLICE ABOUT ME... AND I'M BEING HUNTED!
The DAILY
HOLD-UP KILLERS CAUGHT TELL OF MYSTERIOUS "GHOST RIDER"!
HAVE TO LEAVE... GET OUT OF NEW YORK!
THERE MUST BE SOMEPLACE I CAN HIDE... AND THINK!
...THE GHOST RIDER!
BUT BEFORE YOU CAN FLEE...
...IT IS TIME!
I...MUST HAVE SLEPT... ALL DAY! IT'S NIGHT AGAIN... AND I'M CHANGING... CHANGING TO--
THE BEGINNING!

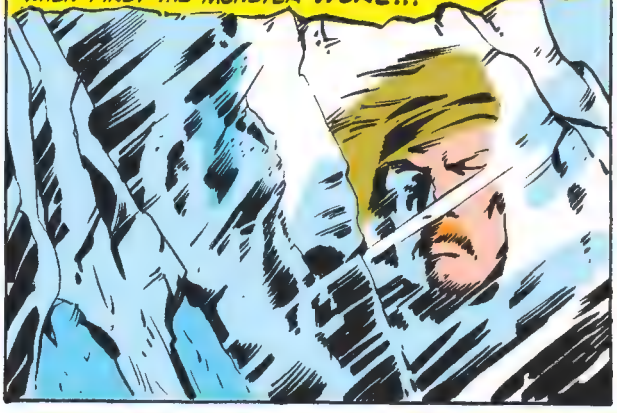

FRANKENSTEIN
MARVEL COMICS GROUP
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
20¢
1
JAN
02165
THE MONSTER OF FRANKENSTEIN
GREAT FIRST ISSUE! ALL NEW!
IT'S--ALIVE! HEAVEN HELP ME-- IT'S ALIVE!
THE MOST FAMOUS, MOST FEARSOME MONSTER OF ALL!
PLUG

Mary Shelley's FRANKENSTEIN!

JANUARY, 1898: A LONE CARGO-SHIP HOPELESSLY LOCKED IN THE ICY GRIPS OF THE ARCTIC WINTER...
A GRIMLY DETERMINED EXPLORER, ROBERT WALTON IV, LEADS A SMALL BAND OF RENEGADES AND CUT-THROATS ON A DEADLY MISSION ACROSS THE ARCTIC TUNDRA... AS DID HIS GREAT-GRANDFATHER SOME HUNDRED YEARS BEFORE...
...UNTIL, BONE-WEARY AND HALF FROZEN... HE FINDS...
--FRANKENSTEIN'S MONSTER!!
PLOOG

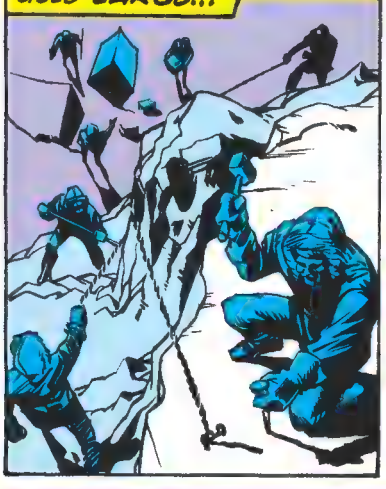
STAN LEE PRESENTS AN AWESOME ADAPTATION BY GARY FRIEDRICH, WRITER, & MIKE PLOOG, ARTIST
WITH THE ABLE ASSISTANCE OF JOHN COSTANZA, LETTERER, AND ROY THOMAS, EDITOR

LITTLE SAVE THE HUGE FORM IS **VISIBLE** THROUGH THE INCHES OF ICE WHICH **ENCASE** THE CREATURE. YET WALTON **KNOWS** IT... KNOWS IT FROM THE GLARING **YELLOW EYES** WHICH PEER OUT AT HIM AS ONCE THEY DID AT POOR **VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN** WHEN FIRST THE MONSTER **WOKE**...



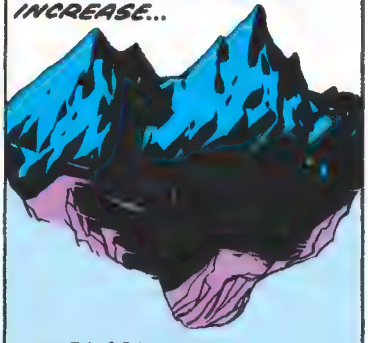
...EYES FILLED EVEN IN **DEATH**, WITH A BURNING **HATRED** FOR ALL MANKIND! BUT WALTON FORCES HIMSELF TO TEAR HIS **GAZE** FROM THEM... FOR THERE IS MUCH TO BE **DONE**... AND LITTLE TIME IN WHICH TO **DO** IT...

A STORM LOOMS ON THE HORIZON... AND THE CREW IS **RESTLESS**... LEARY... EVEN **AFRAID** OF THE PRIZE YOU MUST TAKE ABOARD AS PRECIOUS **CARGO**...



AND, AS THE STORM BOILS EVER **NEARER**, THE CREW'S DISCONTENT BECOMES AN EVEN **GREATER** DANGER THAN THAT POSED BY THE **ELEMENTS**...

WITH EVERY SWING OF THE **PICK**... WITH EACH STEP CLOSER TO **FREEING** THE ICE-ENCASED MONSTROSITY... THE FORCES OF FEAR AND MUTINY **INCREASE**...



...UNTIL AT LAST, WALTON REALIZES HE MUST CALL A **HALT** TO THE GRISLY TASK... IN HOPES THAT A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP WILL EASE THE **TENSIONS** OF THE MOTLEY, NIGH-MURDEROUS CREW...

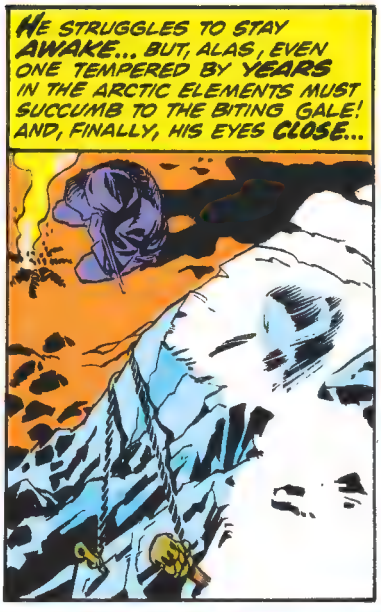
BUT EVEN **THAT** PLOY IS DOOMED TO **FAILURE**. FOR ONCE THE SEED OF FEAR IS **PLANTED**, IT CAN ONLY SPREAD LIKE SOME DEADLY **CANCER**, UNTIL IT DESTROYS ALL IT HAS **INFESTED** ...OR IS TOTALLY HACKED OUT AND CAST AWAY...

IF IT **PLEASE** YOU, CAPTAIN... **CANUTE** WILL STAND THE NIGHT WATCH!

I FEAR YOU CANNOT **TRUST** THE OTHERS!

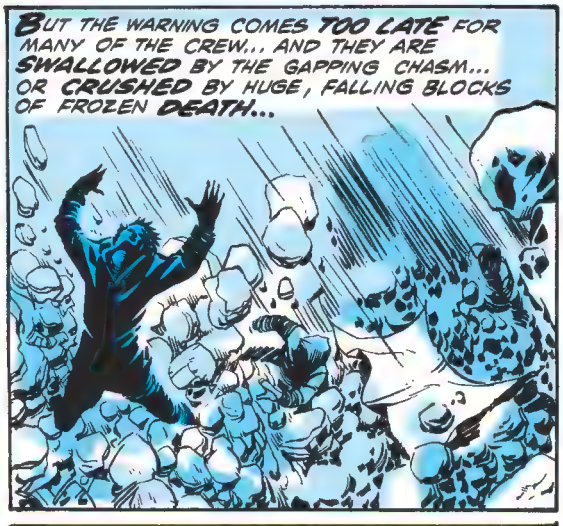
MY **THANKS**, CANUTE... BUT WATCH **CAREFULLY**!' THE SLIGHTEST **MISTAKE** ON YOUR PART COULD COST US OUR **PRIZE** ...AND POSSIBLY OUR VERY **LIVES**!

AND SO, WALTON'S FAITHFUL ESKIMO GUIDE SITS... AND WATCHES! BUT THE ARCTIC NIGHT IS COLD... AND AS THE HOURS CRAWL BY.. CANUTE'S EYELIDS GROW HEAVY IN THE SINKING TEMPERATURES...


HE STRUGGLES TO STAY AWAKE... BUT, ALAS, EVEN ONE TEMPERED BY YEARS IN THE ARCTIC ELEMENTS MUST SUCCUMB TO THE BITING GALE! AND, FINALLY, HIS EYES CLOSE...

...A MERE INSTANT BEFORE FATE INTERLUDES IN THE FORM OF A DEADLY, DIABOLICAL CRACKLING--!
KERRAKK!

BLAM!
ICE BREAK!
RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!!

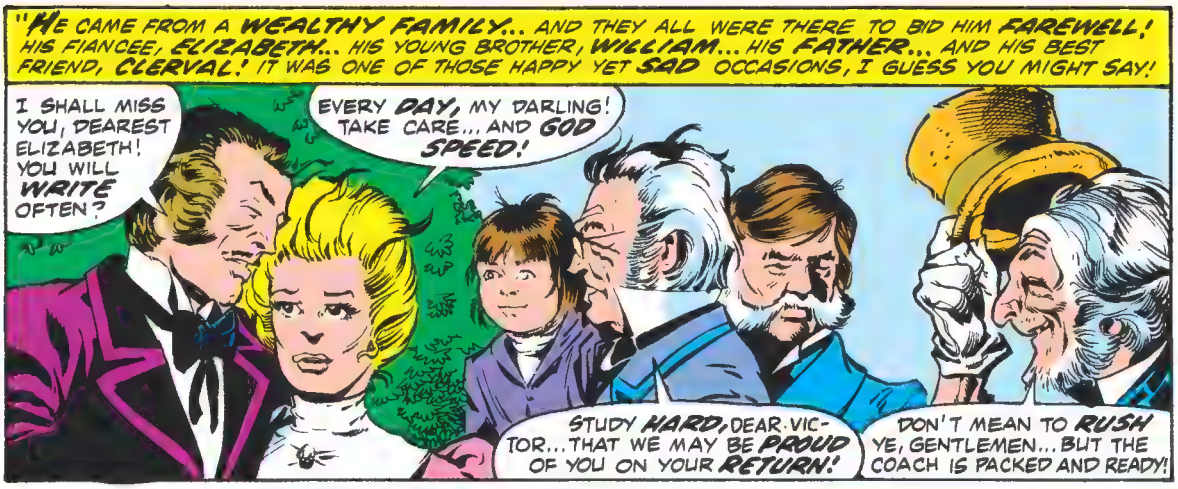

BUT THE WARNING COMES TOO LATE FOR MANY OF THE CREW... AND THEY ARE SWALLOWED BY THE GAPPING CHASM... OR CRUSHED BY HUGE, FALLING BLOCKS OF FROZEN DEATH...

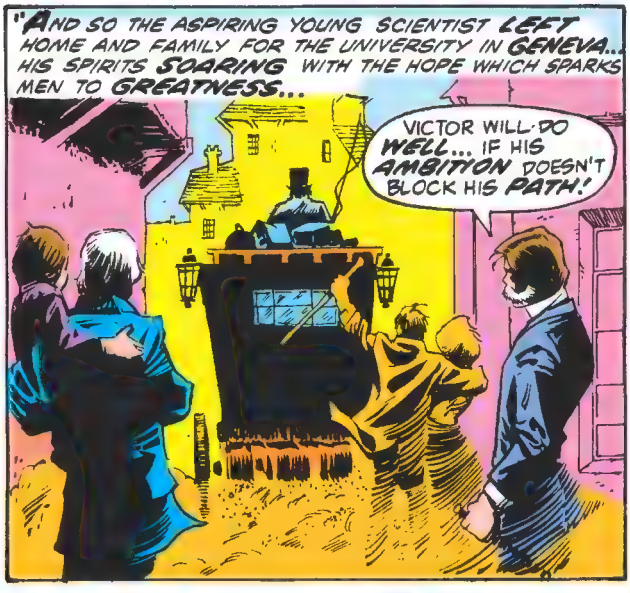
AS QUICKLY AS IT ERUPTED, THE HOLOCAUST SUBSIDES... LEAVING A DAZED CAPTAIN TO PONDER NOT THE FATE OF HIS CREW... BUT THE MYSTERIOUS, FROZEN THING WHICH HAS MADE HIM A MAN POSSESSED...
THE...MONSTER! WHAT HAPPENED TO... THE MONSTER?! I CAN'T HAVE COME SO FAR... ONLY TO LOSE HIM!

'TWAS THE CREATURE WHAT CAUSED IT, 'TWAS!
IT'S CURSED, I TELL YE... AND IT MUST BE DESTROYED!
STOP.' THAT'S THE PROPERTY OF THE CAPTAIN... AND I WON'T LET YOU DAMAGE IT!
OH, YE WON'T, EH?! WELL, WE'LL BE SEEIN' ABOUT THAT, WE WILL!
MAYBE THIS'LL TEACH YE TO MIND YER OWN BUSI-NESS!
WHOK!
:UUNNNHHH!:
WE'VE 'AD ENOUGH O' YER CAPTAIN AND HIS ACCURSED MONSTER, WE 'AVE!
AN' NEITHER YOU NOR ANYONE ELSE IS GONNA KEEP US FROM GETTIN' RID OF 'EM! WE'LL MAKE SURE O' THAT!
STOP, YOU FOOL! ANY MAN GOES NEAR CANUTE... DIES!
BLAM!

YOU WERE SELECTED FOR THIS MISSION BECAUSE NONE OF YOU COULD AFFORD TO ASK QUESTIONS!
AND I WON'T HAVE YOU ASKING THEM NOW! THIS IS A SCIENTIFIC EXPEDITION... YOU NEED KNOW NOTHING ELSE!
SO STOP YOUR SNIVELING AND DO AS YOU'RE TOLD... OR SO HELP ME, I'LL SHOOT DOWN THE LOT OF YOU!
NOW GET THAT BLOCK OF ICE ABOARD SHIP... BEFORE THE STORM REACHES US!
AYE, CAP'N! WE'LL GET YER BLOODY MONSTER ABOARD...
... BUT NEITHER IT NOR YE WILL LIVE TO SEE US SAIL!
AND SO, THE MUTINY QUELLED FOR THE TIME BEING... AND A KILLER WINTER STORM BREATHING DOWN HIS NECK... ROBERT WALTON IV AND HIS PARTY HEAD BACK TOWARD THEIR STRANDED SHIP... DANGER AND EVEN DEATH THEIR COMPANIONS EVERY STEP OF THE WAY...
... BUT LUCK IS WITH THEM! THEY REACH THE SHIP SAFELY, AND BEGIN THE TOUCHY TASK OF HOISTING THEIR EERIE CARGO ABOARD... FEAR TUGGING AT THEIR GUTS WITH EVERY MUSCLE'S CONSTRICTION...

THERE.' THAT'LL BE ALL FOR YOU FOR NOW.' GET BACK TOPSIDE AND STAND YOUR WATCH.'
AYE, CAP'N... BUT WE'LL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT THAT WRETCH MIGHT DO TO YOU.'
I BROUGHT YOU SOME GROG, CAP'N. THOUGHT YOU MIGHT NEED IT.
THAT I DO, LAD! IT'S COLD OUTSIDE... BUT SOMEHOW THE SIGHT OF THAT THING MAKES IT EVEN COLDER IN HERE.'
I WON'T BE ARGUIN' THAT, SIR! WHAT IN THE QUEEN'S NAME IS IT ?!
I DON'T KNOW THAT I SHOULD BE TELLIN' ONE SO YOUNG AS YOU, LAD... OR ANYONE FOR THAT MATTER!
IT'S... IT'S SO BIG... AND THOSE YELLOW EYES... LOOKIN' LIKE IT COULD SEE ME!
WELL... PERHAPS THEY CAN.' WITH THAT CURSED BEAST... ALMOST ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE.' BUT LET ME EXPLAIN.' I HAVE TO CONFIDE IN SOMEONE...
... AND PERHAPS YOU'RE THE BEST CHOICE.' PERHAPS YOU'RE YOUNG ENOUGH TO WITHSTAND THE HORRIBLE STORY BEHIND THOSE EYES.'
ACCORDING TO MY GREAT-GRANDFATHER, WHO ENCOUNTERED THE CREATURE AND HIS ACCURSED CREATOR, NO ONE DREAMED OF THE AWFUL CONSEQUENCES WHICH LAY IN STORE THAT DAY MORE THAN A HUNDRED YEARS AGO... WHEN THEY SENT VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN AWAY TO SCHOOL...


"HE CAME FROM A WEALTHY FAMILY... AND THEY ALL WERE THERE TO BID HIM FAREWELL! HIS FIANCEE, ELIZABETH... HIS YOUNG BROTHER, WILLIAM... HIS FATHER... AND HIS BEST FRIEND, CLERVAL! IT WAS ONE OF THOSE HAPPY YET SAD OCCASIONS, I GUESS YOU MIGHT SAY!
I SHALL MISS YOU, DEAREST ELIZABETH! YOU WILL WRITE OFTEN?
EVERY DAY, MY DARLING! TAKE CARE... AND GOD SPEED!
STUDY HARD, DEAR VICTOR... THAT WE MAY BE PROUD OF YOU ON YOUR RETURN!
DON'T MEAN TO RUSH YE, GENTLEMEN... BUT THE COACH IS PACKED AND READY!


"AND SO THE ASPIRING YOUNG SCIENTIST LEFT HOME AND FAMILY FOR THE UNIVERSITY IN GENEVA... HIS SPIRITS SOARING WITH THE HOPE WHICH SPARKS MEN TO GREATNESS...
VICTOR WILL DO WELL... IF HIS AMBITION DOESN'T BLOCK HIS PATH!

"FRANKENSTEIN DID WELL INDEED IN HIS FIRST TWO YEARS AT THE UNIVERSITY, WORKING HIMSELF TO THE VERGE OF EXHAUSTION... YET EARNING THE ADMIRATION AND RESPECT OF THE FINEST SCIENTIFIC MINDS IN EUROPE...
YOUR WORK IS OUTSTANDING, MY BOY... BUT YOU MUST SLOW DOWN... ERE YOU DRIVE YOURSELF TO AN EARLY GRAVE!

IT IS AS IMPORTANT TO LEARN PATIENCE AS IT IS TO LEARN FACT.' BUT YOU NO DOUBT WILL SEE THAT... NOW THAT WE BEGIN THE DISSECTION OF HUMAN CADAVERS.'

"BUT FRANKENSTEIN DID NOT HEAR! ON THE CONTRARY, WITH EACH LESSON HE BECAME MORE AND MORE IMPATIENT TO DELVE EVER DEEPER INTO THE MYSTERIES OF THE HUMAN BODY... AND IT WAS THE IMPATIENCE AND DRIVING CURIOSITY WHICH WAS SOON TO DRIVE HIM TO DISASTER...

"By the end of his third year, he felt he knew more than his teachers... and thus was prepared to embark upon the darkest voyage into the unknown in the history of mankind...
"But first, he neered the tools with which to ply his deadly trade...
"And he cared little from whence they came: graves... the gallows... anyplace that harbored an undamaged corpse became the haunt of a possessed victor frankenstein!
"Night after night he dragged his grisly loot up the stairs and through the dark, lonely hallway which led to his secluded laboratory.
"... often to obtain a single organ or limb... until, at last, his project neared completion...
I've worked nearly six months... dropped out of school completely...
But, if I succeed... as I know I must... none of my sacrifices will have been in vain!
I will have created human life from that which was dead... and bridged the final gap which leads to immortality!
All mankind will benefit from my discovery... beginning in a few short moments... when at last my creature wakes!

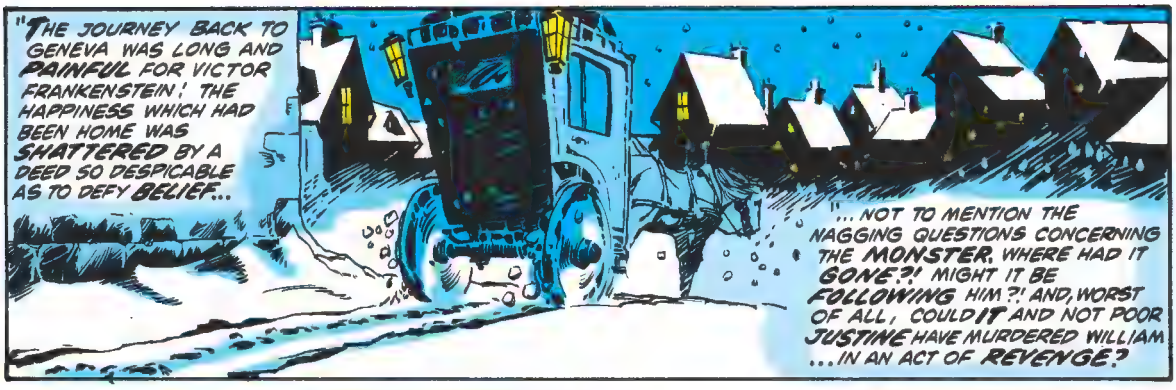
THERE! THE FINAL INJECTION! NOW...I CAN ONLY WAIT...
AND WAIT... AND... WAIT...
IT'S NOT MOVING... NOT EVEN BREATHING!
LIVE, BLAST YOU... LIVE!
"THE BITTER BILE OF FAILURE RUSHED INTO FRANKENSTEIN'S THROAT AS HE STARED AT THE MONSTER'S LIFELESS FORM...
"THEN, OVERCOME WITH DISAPPOINTMENT, YET DETERMINED TO CARRY ON, HE TURNED BACK TO HIS NOTES...
MY GOD... IT'S ALIVE!

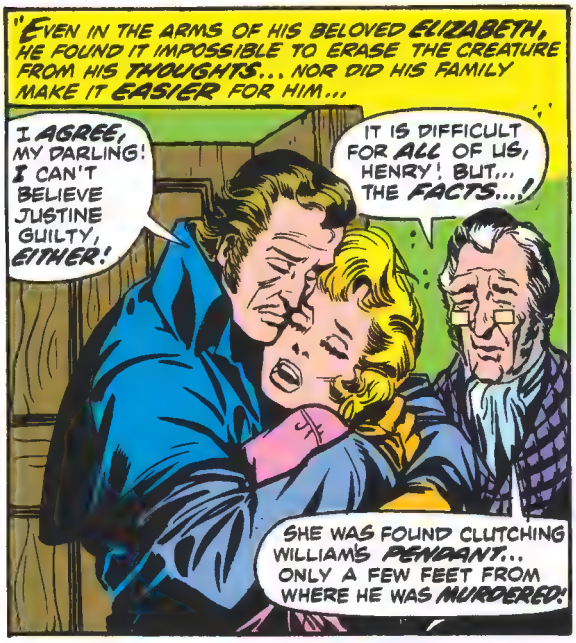
AM I--DREAMING?? PERHAPS THE SHOCK OF THE--NO! IT'S TRUE!
I'VE CREATED A LIVING BEING... FROM VARIOUS PARTS OF THE DEAD!
I'LL BE FAMOUS... I'LL... WAIT! IT--IT'S RISING--WALKING TOWARD ME--STARING AT ME--
THOSE EYES... THOSE HORRIBLE, GLOWING, YELLOW EYES... FILLED WITH HATRED... HATRED OF--ME!!
ARRAAGGHHHH!
NO! STAY AWAY! I CREATED YOU! DO YOU HEAR?! YOU MUST OBEY ME!
"BUT THE CREATURE WOULD NOT OBEY! UTTERING STRANGE, PITIFUL, ALMOST UNEARTHLY SOUNDS, IT CONTINUED TO ADVANCE ON ITS CREATOR... UNTIL, IN TOTAL PANIC, FRANKENSTEIN FLED.."
"AND, MOMENTS LATER, BEHIND THE LOCKED DOOR OF HIS BEDROOM, THE MAN WHO HELD THE KEY TO LIFE ETERNAL COWERED IN THE SHADOWS, IN MORTAL FEAR OF THE THING HE HIMSELF HAD CREATED....!"

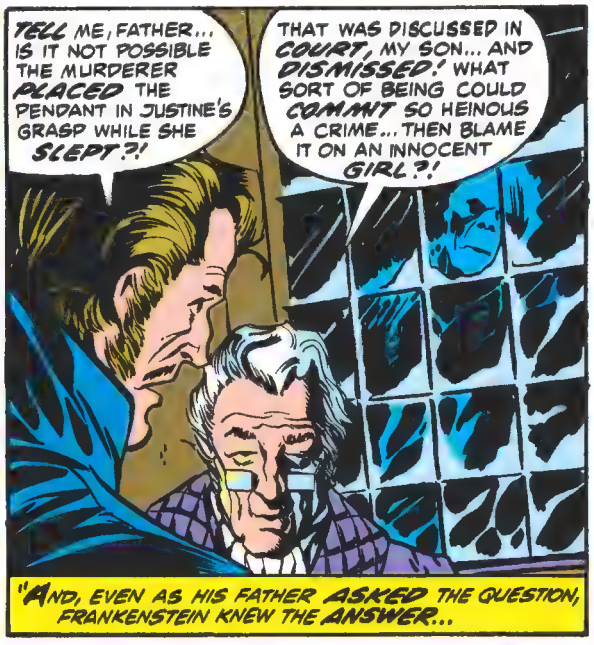
"TREMBLING FROM THE TERROR WHICH HELD HIM IN ITS ICY GRIP, THE EXHAUSTED DOCTOR THREW HIMSELF ONTO HIS BED AND FELL IN TO A DEEP, FITFUL SLEEP...
"UNTIL, HOURS LATER, HE SUDDENLY BOLTED UPRIGHT... SHOCKED INTO CONSCIOUSNESS BY SOME OMINOUS, UNSEEN PRESENCE...
"THEN, AS HIS EYES GREW ACCUSTOMED TO THE DARK, THE MACABRE EVENTS OF EARLIER FLOODED HIS TORTURED BRAIN... AND ONCE MORE HE ATTEMPTED TO FLEE FROM THE HORROR WHICH WAS HIS OWN DOING...
"... ONLY TO MEET ITS HATE-FILLED STARE... AS THE CREATURE HOVERED MENACINGLY OVER HIS BED!
ARRAGH!
"PARALYZED WITH FRIGHT, FRANKENSTEIN WATCHED HIS CREATION AS IT GESTURED TOWARD HIM, UTTERING LOW, GUTTERAL SOUNDS LIKE THOSE OF A WOUNDED BEAST IN MORTAL PAIN...
"... ALMOST AS IF IT WERE TRYING TO COMMUNICATE WITH HIM. BUT FRANKENSTEIN WOULD NOT... COULD NOT LISTEN... NOR TRY TO UNDERSTAND! HE ONLY KNEW THIS MONSTROSITY MUST BE DESTROYED!

"DESPERATE FEAR DESTROYING ALL SENSE OF LOGIC, FRANKENSTEIN GRABBED A CHAIR AS THE CREATURE MOVED TOWARD HIM... TOWERING OVER HIS HEAD BY MORE THAN TWO FEET...
"AND WHETHER OUT OF FEAR... HATRED... OR SHEER INSTINCT FOR SURVIVAL... THE DOCTOR LASHED OUT...
AAGGHH!
GET AWAY FROM ME! DO YOU HEAR?! KEEP BACK!
"BUT THE VELOCITY OF THE CHAIR STRIKING THE CREATURE'S ROCK-HARD SKIN WAS LIKE A MATCH-STICK STRIKING A BOULDER... AND, FAR MORE SERIOUS... FRANKENSTEIN HAD ESTABLISHED HIMSELF AS THE CREATURE'S ENEMY...
ARRAGGHHH!
THE CANDLE-STICK! HE YANKED IT FROM ME--AS IF I WERE A CHILD!
HE HAS THE STRENGTH OF TEN MEN! HAVE TO GET AWAY... ESCAPE, BEFORE!
"THE CREATURE SOME-HOW BECAME PRE-OCCUPIED WITH THE WEAPON ITS CREATOR HAD PLANNED TO USE FOR ITS DESTRUCTION... AND THE DOCTOR WATCHED IN DISBELIEF AS IT CRUSHED THE STEEL LIKE PAPER IN ITS BARE HANDS! THEN, REASON RETURNED, AND FRANKENSTEIN FLED FOR HIS VERY LIFE...

"WITH NOT THE FAINTEST IDEA OF WHERE TO GO OR WHAT TO DO, HE FLED INTO THE RAIN-SWEPT DARKNESS... HIS LEGS TOO NUMB TO CARRY HIM FARTHER... AND HIS FEAR TOO GREAT TO ALLOW HIM TO STOP...
"BUT, FINALLY, THE BODY OVER-CAME THE MIND... AND HE COLLAPSED ON THE COLD WET EARTH... THE EARTH FROM WHICH HE HAD STOLEN THE SECRET OF LIFE ITSELF...
"ONCE MORE HE WAS OVER-COME BY RESTLESS, NIGHTMARE-FILLED SLEEP... UNTIL, AS DAWN STOLE ACROSS THE LAWN WHERE HE RESTED...
VICTOR! IN HEAVEN'S NAME-- WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?! YOU'RE SOAKED TO THE BONE!
OPEN YOUR EYES, MAN! SAY SOMETHING TO ME! IT'S ME... CLERVAL!
CLER... VAL?! THANK GOD... YOU'RE... HERE!
"CLERVAL TOOK HIS DELIRIOUS FRIEND TO HIS OWN HOTEL ROOM... WHERE HE HOVERED BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH FOR MANY WEEKS...
"UNTIL, AT LAST, THE FEVER WAS BROKEN... AND FRANKENSTEIN REGAINED CONSCIOUS-NESS...
IT HAS BEEN A LONG ORDEAL, VICTOR... BUT THE CRISIS IS PASSED! YOUR FULL RECOVERY IS NOW ASSURED.
THEREFORE, MUCH AS IT GRIEVES ME... MY FIRST WORDS TO YOU MUST BE THOSE OF GREATEST SORROW!
MY FRIEND... I RECEIVED A LETTER FROM ELIZABETH TODAY... AND... YOUR YOUNGER BROTHER WILLIAM... HE'S BEEN MURDERED!
I FEAR THE DETAILS ARE NOT CLEAR OTHER THAN THAT YOUR FATHER'S YOUNG WARD... JUSTINE MORITZ... HAS BEEN CHARGED!
WILLIAM... DEAD... AND POOR JUSTINE?! GOOD LORD!
AS YOU MAY HAVE SURMISED I HAVE GRIEVOUS PROBLEMS OF MY OWN! BUT THEY MUST WAIT! NOW... I MUST GO TO FATHER!


"THE JOURNEY BACK TO GENEVA WAS LONG AND PAINFUL FOR VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN! THE HAPPINESS WHICH HAD BEEN HOME WAS SHATTERED BY A DEED SO DESPICABLE AS TO DEFY BELIEF...
"...NOT TO MENTION THE NAGGING QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE MONSTER. WHERE HAD IT GONE?! MIGHT IT BE FOLLOWING HIM?! AND, WORST OF ALL, COULD IT AND NOT POOR JUSTINE HAVE MURDERED WILLIAM ...IN AN ACT OF REVENGE?


"EVEN IN THE ARMS OF HIS BELOVED ELIZABETH, HE FOUND IT IMPOSSIBLE TO ERASE THE CREATURE FROM HIS THOUGHTS... NOR DID HIS FAMILY MAKE IT EASIER FOR HIM...
I AGREE, MY DARLING! I CAN'T BELIEVE JUSTINE GUILTY, EITHER!
IT IS DIFFICULT FOR ALL OF US, HENRY! BUT... THE FACTS...!
SHE WAS FOUND CLUTCHING WILLIAM'S PENDANT... ONLY A FEW FEET FROM WHERE HE WAS MURDERED!


TELL ME, FATHER... IS IT NOT POSSIBLE THE MURDERER PLACED THE PENDANT IN JUSTINE'S GRASP WHILE SHE SLEPT?!
THAT WAS DISCUSSED IN COURT, MY SON... AND DISMISSED! WHAT SORT OF BEING COULD COMMIT SO HEINOUS A CRIME... THEN BLAME IT ON AN INNOCENT GIRL?!
"AND, EVEN AS HIS FATHER ASKED THE QUESTION, FRANKENSTEIN KNEW THE ANSWER...

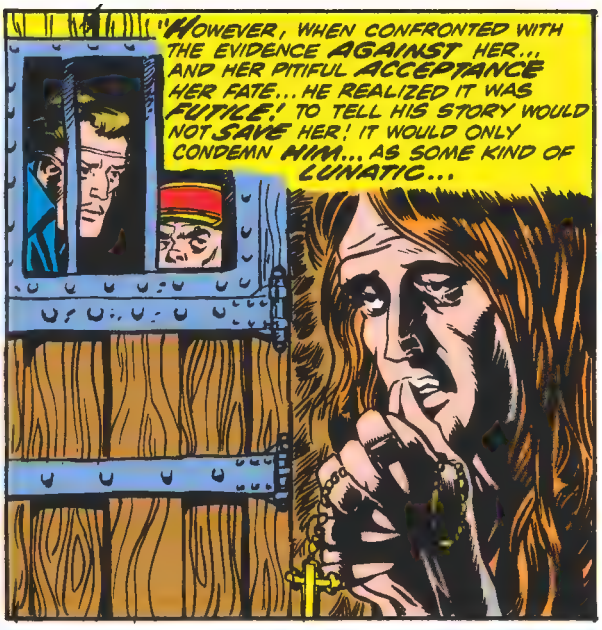
I KNEW IT... WAS CERTAIN OF IT! AND NOW MY MOST TERRIBLE SUSPICIONS ARE CONFIRMED!
THE CREATURE LIVES... AND SEEKS REVENGE!
BUT I MUST STOP HIM... I MUST!

"BUT, AS QUICKLY AS IT HAD APPEARED... THE MONSTER WAS GONE...
WHAT IS IT, VICTOR? WHY DID YOU BOLT FROM THE ROOM?
I... SAW SOMEONE... PEERING IN THE WINDOW! BUT THESE TRACKS SHOW THAT HE GOT AWAY!

WHEN... WHEN WILL JUSTINE BE HANGED, FATHER?!
TOMORROW, I BELIEVE! THERE'S NO HOPE FOR HER... NOT THAT THE UNGRATEFUL WRETCH DESERVES IT!

"BUT FRANKENSTEIN COULD NOT... WOULD NOT ACCEPT JUSTINE'S COURT-ORDAINED FATE! HE AND HE ALONE KNEW HER TO BE INNOCENT... AND HE DETERMINED TO VISIT HER IN PRISON... HOPING TO FIND A WAY TO FREE HER, YET PROTECT HIMSELF...

"HOWEVER, WHEN CONFRONTED WITH THE EVIDENCE AGAINST HER... AND HER PITIFUL ACCEPTANCE HER FATE... HE REALIZED IT WAS FUTILE! TO TELL HIS STORY WOULD NOT SAVE HER! IT WOULD ONLY CONDEMN HIM... AS SOME KIND OF LUNATIC...



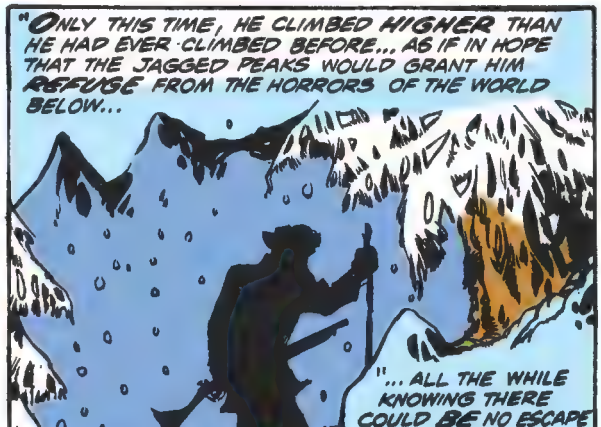
"AND SO, JUSTINE MORITZ WAS HANGED...DIED AT THE AGE OF 21 FOR A CRIME SHE DID NOT COMMIT, BEFORE THE GLAZED EYES OF A TORTURED VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN! THE MONSTER HAD LAID HIS TRAP PERFECTLY... AND TWO INNOCENT PEOPLE NOW LAY DEAD...

"WHO REALLY KILLED JUSTINE AND WILLIAM, THE TORTURED DOCTOR ASKED HIMSELF TIME AND AGAIN AS HE WALKED AWAY FROM THE GALLOWS! 'WAS IT THE MONSTER OR WAS IT... I?

"THE NEXT MORNING, SUFFERING FROM A GNAWING SICKNESS NO MAN HAD EVER BEFORE KNOWN... FRANKENSTEIN PACKED AND DEPARTED INTO THE MOUNTAINS...

"THERE, IN THE SERENITY OF THE SNOW-CAPPED ALPS, HE HAD OFTEN GONE AS A BOY TO PONDER HIS PROBLEMS... AND NOW, FACED WITH THE GREATEST CRISIS IN HIS LIFE, HE RETURNED...

"ONLY THIS TIME, HE CLIMBED HIGHER THAN HE HAD EVER CLIMBED BEFORE... AS IF IN HOPE THAT THE JAGGED PEAKS WOULD GRANT HIM REFUGE FROM THE HORRORS OF THE WORLD BELOW...



"... ALL THE WHILE KNOWING THERE COULD BE NO ESCAPE ...SAVE THRU THE DEATH EITHER OF HIMSELF... OR THAT OF THE MURDEROUS MONSTER HE HAD CREATED...

"STILL HE CLIMBED HIGHER, IGNORING THE MARROW-CHILLING WINTER WINDS WHICH HOWLED AROUND HIM...

"UNTIL, FINALLY, HIS LEGS GREW WEARY... AND HE SOUGHT REFUGE IN A CAVE! THERE, WARMED BY A ROARING FIRE, HE BEGAN TO SEARCH HIS MIND... DELVE DEEP INTO HIS PSYCHE FOR AN ANSWER TO THE GARGANTUAN OGRE WHICH THREATENED TO DESTROY HIM AND ALL HE HELD DEAR...

"INTO THE WEE HOURS OF EARLY MORNING HE SAT IN A TRANCE, UNABLE TO DETERMINE HOW HIS EXPERIMENT FOR THE BETTERMENT OF ALL MANKIND HAD GONE AWRY... OR WHY! HE COULD ONLY BE CERTAIN THAT HIS LIFE WOULD NEVER BE THE SAME... AND THAT HE COULD NEVER KNOW PEACE UNTIL HIS CREATION WAS DESTROYED...

"BUT, AS HE SAT ENGULFED IN A SEA OF SELF-PITY AND TORMENT... HE FAILED TO NOTICE ANOTHER SINISTER PRESENCE AT THE MOUTH OF THE CAVE...

"UNTIL IT WAS TOO LATE... FAR TOO LATE...!

YOU!

YES!!

AND FOR YOUR CRIME AGAINST NATURE, VICTOR FRANKEN-STEIN--

--YOU MUST DIE!!

NOOOOo!

AARRHHHH!
ANIMALS FEAR FIRE... AND SO SHOULD YOU!

STARTLED HIM... AND THE PAIN HAS DISTRACTED HIM, AT LEAST MOMENTARILY!
IF ONLY I CAN REACH MY GUN... AND PLACE A BULLET BE-TWEEN THOSE GHASTLY EYES!

KRAK!
ARRAAGGHHH!
FIRST YOU BURN ME...
...THEN YOU SHOOT ME!

BY ALL THAT IS HOLY, FRANKENSTEIN... IS THERE NO END TO YOUR CRUELTY?!
GOOD LORD! THE BULLET BARELY FAZED HIM!
ISN'T IT ENOUGH THAT I'VE CREATED A MONSTER?! MUST HE BE INDESTRUCT-IBLE AS WELL?

DON'T... PLEASE! LET ME EXPLAIN!
EXPLAIN?!
HOW WILL YOU EXPLAIN, FRANKENSTEIN? LOOK AT ME... AT WHAT I AM!
NO... THERE WILL BE NO EXPLANATION... SAVE FOR MINE! AND WHEN I HAVE FINISHED... YOU WILL PAY WITH YOUR LIFE!

LISTEN, FRANKENSTEIN... AND LISTEN WELL... WHILE I SPIN A TALE OF HORROR TO CHILL THE BONES OF EVEN A MONSTER SUCH AS YOURSELF!
GO ON, CAPTAIN; WHAT DID THE CREATURE TELL HIM?!
BE PATIENT, LAD... WHILE I SEARCH FOR THE PROPER WORDS... TO DESCRIBE THE TORTURE THE POOR WRETCH HAD ENDURED!
CAP'N! WE'VE BROKEN LOOSE! WE'RE SAILIN' AGAIN... BUT THE STORM IS ALMOST ON US!
SOUND THE ALARM BELL! I WANT ALL HANDS ON DECK... AND THE MAST SECURED!
BUT, BEFORE THE PREPARATIONS CAN BE MADE, THE STORM STRIKES, TOSSING THE HUGE CRAFT ABOUT HELPLESSLY, LIKE A BIT OF DRIFTWOOD IN THE SURF...
IT'S NO USE, CAP'N! WE CAN'T HOLD 'ER!
THEN CUT THE SAILS LOOSE! WE'LL BE SWAMPED IF WE DON'T GET THEM DOWN!
EVEN AT THAT, WE DON'T HAVE MUCH CHANCE... BUT IT'S BETTER THAN NO CHANCE AT ALL!
AYE, CAP'N! I'LL CUT 'ER LOOSE!
BUT IT WON'T 'ELP US... NOT WITH THAT --THAT MONSTER ON BOARD!

HOLD 'ER RIGHT THERE, CAP'N! MAKE A MOVE... AND THE BOY DIES!
WE'RE TAKIN' OVER THIS SHIP... AND OUR FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS IS GOIN' TO BE--TO HURL THAT CURSED THING OVERBOARD!
YOU RUDDY FOOLS! WHAT HAS THAT TO DO WITH THE WEATHER?!
ARE YOU WILLING TO RISK HANGING BECAUSE OF A SUPERSTITION?
THE MAST...GIVIN' AWAAAY
THE MAST SNAPPED--FALLING RIGHT ON US!
GET OUT OF THE WAY--BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!
BUT FATE DOESN'T ALWAYS RESPECT THE BRAVE... AND AS WALTON DIRECTS HIS MUTINOUS CREWMEN TO SAFETY, THE MAST COMES CRASHING DOWN ON TOP OF HIM...
EVEN AS HE CRIES OUT IN AGONY, HIS SCREAMS ARE DROWNED BY THE HOWLING GALE... AND HIS SHIP SPINS DIZZILY OUT OF CONTROL...
... WHILE HIS CREW COWERS AND SCURRIES FOR NON-EXISTENT SHELTER... AND THE SHIP PLUMMETS TOWARD CERTAIN DOOM IN THE ICY ARCTIC WATERS...

AND BELOW, IN THE WARMTH OF THE CAPTAIN'S CABIN... THE HUGE CACHE OF ICE BEGINS TO MELT, AS THE VIOLENT TOSSING SLIDES IT EVER CLOSER TO A WOOD-BURNING STOVE...
THEN, SUDDENLY, THE SHIP LURCHES MADDENINGLY TO THE STARBOARD HURLING EVERYTHING ABOARD IN ALL DIRECTIONS... INCLUDING THE CACHE AND ITS STRANGE CAPTIVE...!
MOMENTS LATER, AS THE SHIP RIGHTS ITSELF, THE CABIN IS A SHAMBLES... FURNITURE SMASHED TO BITS... PAPERS AND RECORDS STREWN ABOUT... THE CACHE OF ICE PARTIALLY SHATTERED AND LYING ATOP THE STILL-BURNING STOVE...
AND, IN THE MIDST OF THIS WILD SCENE OF DESTRUCTION AND DEVASTATION... A CHALKY WHITE HAND PROTRUDES FROM THE ICE AND, UNBELIEVABLY... BEGINS TO MOVE...!
NEXT THE BRIDE OF THE MONSTER!

CELEBRATE 80 YEARS OF MARVEL COMICS, DECADE BY DECADE!

GROOVY GHOULS OF THE SUPERNATURAL SEVENTIES!

It was an era of black-and-white magazines filled with macabre monsters and unsettling new titles starring horror-themed "heroes"! Now, thrill to Marvel's greatest horror icons: The melancholy muck monster known as the Man-Thing — whosoever knows fear burns at his touch! Morbius, the Living Vampire! Jack Russell, cursed to be a Werewolf by Night! And the flame-skulled Spirit of Vengeance, Ghost Rider! But what happens when they're forced together to become...the Legion of Monsters? Plus: Stories starring Dracula, Frankenstein's monster, Manphibian, the vampire-hunter Blade — and never-before-reprinted tales of terror!

Collecting *Legion of Monsters (1975) #1*, *Marvel Preview #8*, *Marvel Premiere #28*, *Marvel Spotlight (1971) #2* and *#5*, *Tomb of Dracula (1972) #1*, and *Frankenstein (1973) #1* — written by Doug Moench, Marv Wolfman, Gerry Conway, Roy Thomas, Don McGregor, Bill Mantlo, Gary Friedrich and more; and illustrated by Val Mayerik, Dave Cockrum, Paul Kirschner, Dick Giordano, Sonny Trinidad, Gene Colan, Mike Ploog and Frank Robbins.

MARVEL 80 YEARS

T+